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Data for a study of the role of a generalized national organization in the field of adult education were collected through a questionnaire completed by members and former members of the Adult Education Association (AEA) and by adult educators who had never joined, interviews with leaders in adult education and with executive officers of several generalized national organizations in other fields, examination of AEA documents, and study of reports of previous surveys undertaken as sponsored by the AEA. Part I attempts to discover how adult educators define adult education, what sort of people they are, and how they regard their field. The history of the AEA is considered, its membership described, and the relationship of members to the association discussed. There is analysis of past and present members to delineate types of adult educators to whom the association has appealed and is currently appealing. Part II explores special problems of the AEA, such as the efforts to build a democratic organization and the relations with other organizations engaged in adult education activities. Adult education is considered as a social movement and as a profession. Part III gives the purposes and goals as defined by AEA members and a summary of the findings. Three appendixes present the methodology of the study, membership trends, and statistical data. (aj)

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THE ROLE OF A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION IN ADULT EDUCATION

Edmund deS. Brunner
William L. Nicholls II
Sam D. Sieber

A Report to the Executive Committee
of the Adult Education Association

1959

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INTRODUCTION

This document is the report of a study of the role of a generalized national organization in the field of adult education which the Bureau of Applied Social Research was asked to undertake in June, 1958, by the Adult Education Association of the U. S. A.

The questions posed by the Adult Education Association follow.

1. What should be the principal objectives and program of a national organization concerned with adult education in relation to the basic problems, needs and trends in adult education in the United States as of the 1950's?

2. What organizational and administrative pattern or patterns appear desirable to achieve these objectives and purposes?

    a. For a national organization internally?

    b. For a national organization in its relations with numerous other organizations having varying degrees of interest in adult education?

3. To what extent are the problems and difficulties which the Adult Education Association has faced since its founding in 1951, largely the result of:

    a. The organizational and administrative patterns which it has used?

    b. The nature and stage of development of adult education in the United States?

    c. The normal problems of pioneer efforts to organize a "movement" or an "idea"?

    d. Possible failure to center on and persist with attainable objectives and purposes?

    e. Inadequate public understanding about adult education?

    f. Other influences and factors?

Sources of Data. The study began on July 1, 1958. A note on methodology appears in Appendix A. Suffice it to say here that the data on which this report is based come from the following sources:

Questionnaires to members and former members of the Adult Education Association and to adult educators who had never joined this generalized national organization;

Interviews with leaders in the field of adult education as nominated chiefly by a panel of present and former members of the Executive Committee of the Adult Education Association and with a representative sample of members of the Delegate Assembly of the Adult Education Association from all its regions, together with a relatively few interviews with former members;

Interviews with the executive officers of several generalized national organizations in other fields;

Examination of the historical documents recording the processes leading up to the organization of the Adult Education Association, of the minutes of the Founding Assembly and of subsequent actions by the Executive Committee and Delegate Assembly of the Adult Education Association up to and including March, 1959;

Study of the reports of previous "direction finding" surveys undertaken or sponsored by the Adult Education Association.

The Report Outlined. The report is divided into three parts. The first concerns the field of adult education and the Adult Education Association of the U. S. A., which throughout this report will be designated as the AEA. This part attempts to discover what adult educators mean by adult education, what sort of people they are and how they regard their field. The history of the AEA is briefly considered. The membership of the AEA is next described and analyzed, and the relationship of members to the association discussed. Finally, in this part a chapter is devoted to former and never members. The analysis in the four chapters covering present and past members is quite detailed. It is important, in the opinion of the authors and in terms of program building, to be quite clear as to the types of adult educators to whom the association has appealed and is currently appealing.

In Part 2 some special problems of the AEA are explored, such as the efforts to build a democratic organization and the relations with other organizations engaged in adult education activities. Adult education is also considered as a social movement and as a profession. Finally, the continuous direction finding efforts of the AEA leading up to the present study receive attention.

Part 3 gives the purposes and goals for a generalized national organization in adult education as defined by the members of the AEA, and presents a summary and the conclusions of the authors. Three appendices discuss in order the methodology of the study, the membership trends of the AEA, and present statistical tables not used in the main body of the report, which contain detailed data supporting the findings.

Basic Considerations. Several introductory comments are in order. The life blood and content of any organization is people. Hence any study, whether of the form and structure of an organization or of its objectives and activities, must rely chiefly on sociological and psychological factors. Technically logical and even legal organizational forms are present and must obviously be considered in offering policy suggestions, but they are secondary. One evidence of this is the generally recognized fact that within any organization there are both formal systems of control and also informal systems of association and action, often more powerful than the formal. It follows that the structure or form of an organization must be considered in relation to its activities and the attitudes of its members, which may be characterized as being the climate of the organization.

For the most part studies of organizations have been "those with a well-defined membership which is sharply stratified and in frequent interaction."[1] These are sometimes called "closed systems" or "closed" organizations. Examples are industrial organizations, government bureaucracies and trade unions.[2] Thus far sociologists have not studied organizations as amorphous as the AEA or, to take another illustration, the National Conference on Social Welfare. There is therefore no explicit theoretical frame of references into which this report neatly fits, though some of the findings conform to expectations based on social theory or the findings of social research.

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[1] David L. Sills, A Proposed Diagnostic Framework, New York: Bureau of Applied Social Research, 1958, dittoed.

[2] Illustrative examples of sociological analyses of organizations of this kind are the following:

Industrial organizations: F. J. Roethlisberger and William J. Dickson, Management and the Worker, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1943; Alvin W. Gouldner, Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy, Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1954.

Government bureaucracies: Walter R. Sharp, The French Civil Service, New York, Macmillan Co., 1931; Peter M. Blau, The Dynamics of Bureaucracy, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955.

Trade unions: Seymour M. Lipset, Martin A. Trow and James S. Coleman, Union Democracy, Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1956; Arnold M. Rose, Union Solidarity, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1952.

Voluntary health associations: David L. Sills, The Volunteers, Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957.

Several readers of this report when in manuscript form have suggested "omissions" and have urged that these be included. This point of view would be entirely legitimate in a text. This document, however, is the report of a study of a specific organization and its membership. Thus the authors are aware, for instance, of points of view relating to the definition of adult education that are not mentioned. The "omission" is due to the fact that these viewpoints were not mentioned by those leaders who were asked to define adult education. Similar omissions will be found elsewhere in this report.

Distribution of Responsibilities. The study was a cooperative effort of the three authors, assisted by the statistical staff of the Bureau of Applied Social Research. All the authors shared in the field interviewing and in planning the tabulations required. In addition to these tasks, Mr. William Nicholls, the Associate Director, took major responsibility for designing the instruments used, and Mr. Sieber served as coding supervisor and editor for the tables.

Each author accepted major responsibility for first drafts of chapters of the report, and these drafts were then considered critically by all of them before being put into final shape by the original writer. Mr. Nicholls wrote Chapters One, Four, Seven, Eight, Ten and Eleven; Mr. Sieber Chapters Five and Six; the Director the rest.

Acknowledgments. The authors wish to record with appreciation the unstinting cooperation of the AEA officers and staff, especially Mr. Malcolm Knowles, director during the first half of the study, and Mr. Glenn Jensen, his successor. Dr. Herbert Maccoby conducted all interviews on the Pacific Coast. Mrs. George Miles served as an effective and efficient secretary for the project.

Edmund deS. Brunner

Chapter I

THE DEFINITION OF ADULT EDUCATION*

It is obvious that any national organization, to work effectively, must have both a clear-cut statement of its objectives and also a definition of its field of operations. In fact, these two requisites are interdependent. In this chapter we will concern ourselves with the problem of how the field is defined.

For some "arguing about definitions when there is work to be done" is a waste of time. But it is an extremely practical problem for a national organization attempting to serve the field of adult education to consider. Several interviewees, including Executive Committee members, see at least some of the difficulties of the AEA as resulting from the lack of agreement on what adult education is.

> The AEA is not sure what they ought to be. I suppose they are to exert leadership in the field of adult education, but they are without a common definition of adult education and they don't know what leadership is needed.

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> One major difficulty has been a lack of agreement with respect to some fundamental concepts of adult education. . . . It is difficult to arrive at a consensus on the definition of adult education.

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> The whole concept of an umbrella organization representing this diverse a field which no two people would define the same way is the inherent weakness of all.

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> I feel we tried to put too much in the same organization. This was largely because of the difficulty of defining adult education.

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*This chapter was written by William L. Nicholls II.

The definition of adult education has quite obviously been going through an evolution in the last half-century. Once adult education was regarded by many people in the United States chiefly as the teaching of English and citizenship to foreign-born immigrants, especially those who desired to be naturalized. Others included various types of vocational education for adults in their definition. One result of the rapid development of adult education after World War I, and especially during the Great Depression, was an expansion in the activities leaders felt could legitimately be included in a definition of adult education. In other countries the first application of the term varied with the particular tasks to which adult education was consciously applied, but a similar extension of meaning has occurred.[1] Inevitably, with this expansion differences in phraseology and philosophy arose. Today a discussion of "What is adult education?" brings out many points of view and sometimes even results in injured feelings, as one or another group feels they are being excluded.

Perhaps "adult education," like many another term which experienced a rapid growth in popularity and extension in meaning, has reached the point of over-expansion. Since it has been applied widely, it may have lost much of its value for distinguishing what it denotes from other related activities. If so, this inflation in meaning is likely to result in a devaluation of the term, a shift toward restricting its meaning, or the substitution of a newer, more restrictive term to replace it. There are indications that such results are occurring. One former president of the AEA reported that he saw the term as "meaningless and fuzzy" and felt it should be dismissed entirely in favor of "continuing education." That about one in ten of those interviewed emphasized the importance of stressing continuing education rather than adult education probably indicates not only a shift in philosophy but also a dissatisfaction with the vagueness of "adult education" as it stands today.

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[1] Cf. E. M. Hutchinson, "The Nature and Role of Adult Education," _Fundamental and Adult Education_, vol. X, no. 3, 1958, pp. 100-104; and Paul Lengrand, "Adult Education," _Fundamental and Adult Education_, vol. X, no. 3, 1958, pp. 91-100.

As one approach to understanding how top adult educators define their field today, we asked each of the persons interviewed the direct question: "What is adult education?" Although some of the interviewees claimed they could not or would not attempt a definition, or evaded the problem by saying that "Adult education is whatever adult educators make it by what they and their organizations are doing," most provided more detailed answers. Since no advance warning of this question was given the interviewees, the definitions they put forth were not always carefully thought out. Yet these answers are of interest as showing the rough working definition with which these top adult educators probably operate on a day-to-day basis.

Many of the answers offered tend to support the idea that the meaning of "adult education" has indeed reached a point of over-expansion. About a third of those queried specifically mentioned that they wanted or preferred a broad or very broad definition with the inclusion of many kinds of activities. A few examples may illustrate the breadth which they suggested.

> Very broadly, any activity that increases a person's stature, a process which continues through life. I would like to emphasize the broad aspect. Anything that makes a person a better member of his community; any process increasing knowledge in any field.

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> It includes the whole range of adult learning both in terms of planned formal and informal and unplanned learning. The activities are not necessarily thought to be learning, but can be designed for social action or social change. The range is from TV programs where the adult is very passive to carrying a picket sign--where he is completely identified.

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> It is anything that helps adults to change and grow. I am now working with the United World Federalists, and I consider that adult education.

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> I see it more broadly than some people. I see it not only as institutional programs, but as a range of cultural activities as well--for example, theater going, home reading, and so on in addition to vocational programs.

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> The less you define it, the better you understand it. It is anything that serves as an enrichment, enlargement of point of view, a change of attitudes for the adult.

Not all of those who wanted a "broad" definition took as extreme a position as those quoted above. Nevertheless, the frequent and sometimes passionate insistence on so broad a definition poses an interesting intellectual puzzle. What can possibly be gained by defining adult education so broadly that it becomes indistinguishable from a trip around the world, a strike, psychoanalysis, propaganda for any one of a number of causes, reading a newspaper, attending the theater, or even just accumulating experience by getting older?

One thing a number of these definitions do point out is that adult education is something which has an effect on the recipient. Such definitions therefore suggest that education may occur outside as well as within a program designed for education. Because adult education came of age during the period when Dewey and others were attacking a too narrow definition of education, the emphasis on breadth may reflect the reaction against formalism and rigidity which accompanied adult education's growth.

There would seem to be, however, various structural reasons why many adult educators tend to define adult education very broadly. A very broad definition also may help to suggest all the places where education may take place, and this may be a help in determining new areas in which to launch adult education programs. In so doing, those in charge of adult education programs are able to justify an expansion of their financial bases, increase their facilities, preserve or increment their staffs, and generally improve their positions. While a small part of the motivation for this may be "empire building," the major intent is undoubtedly a sincere desire to educate in as many ways as possible and to advance adult education both generally and specifically. The comments of various interviewees suggest that this may be the case.

> Within the context of the work I do [as the dean of a large extension program] I tend to define it very broadly. I prefer the broad definition because it shows ways of reaching adults, such as through the mass media, TV, etc.

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> Any definition I give has to reflect the fact that I am in a council of adult education. In this work I feel that if a person feels some activity is education, I will include it.

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> From an operational point of view it's possible to make a distinction between adult education and non-adult education. I would strike out recreation and include only the more traditional education. But in some situations where necessary I would include such activities as folk dancing.

While the above process is probably more common inside formal programs, other social factors may have led to an expansion in the meaning of "adult education" outside the schools. It seems possible that in some cases those in some essentially promotional, propaganda, and social action activities may have further stretched the definition of adult education to include themselves under it in order to dignify these activities by placing them under the more respectable rubric of "education." With an increase in the popularity and breadth of the term and with no restriction on who may call his activities "educational," it would be surprising if such a stretching had not occurred.

The AEA itself, and perhaps other large organizations in adult education, may also have aided these tendencies by helping to popularize the term and by attempting to enlist and serve as many groups and harmonize as many philosophies as possible. However, whether or not the AEA has contributed to the confusion, it certainly has inherited it.

The director of one large organization of adult educators obliquely refers to this problem while offering one important reason for keeping the definition a broad one:

> I should be more specific [about what adult education is]. I would like to see the term more restricted. It is now so broad it doesn't have much meaning, as with the term "democracy." But in practice it can't be. At this stage of adult education it is essential to give direction to every phase. It is too early to concentrate on specific areas. We don't know enough yet.

Despite these pressures for a very broad definition of adult education, most of those interviewed held a more delimited, and therefore manageable, idea of what adult education is. The sheer administrative problem of knowing what was and was not under one's jurisdiction as an adult educator impressed upon most the necessity of using the term in a more restricted sense.

This practical problem was especially well put by one interviewee who answered:

> It would not be adult education for a man to turn on a program on TV by dial turning. It would be educational, however. I wouldn't want to accept the responsibility for improving it. Whether there is any education can not be predicted unless the giver sets out to give education. I believe that a great deal of education takes place while an individual is not coming into contact with educational programs and activities. But unless there is a motive on the part of the [disseminator of the information] to make the educational aim obvious, . . . then I wouldn't call it adult education.

Several other interviewees voiced this distinction between activities which happened to be educational and adult education in the sense of a purposeful program. In fact, nearly half of those queried mentioned the criteria of purpose, planning, organization, or sequence in a program as the distinguishing marks of adult education, and only about one in ten specifically objected to such criteria. Some of the more thoughtful and interesting definitions along this line are provided below:

> [Adult education is] an organized approach of sequential learning, presenting a body of information for purposes of information and learning.

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> [Adult education is] anything that involves the planned and organized effort to diffuse knowledge involving the direct relationship between the diffuser and the receiver.

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> It is anything we do in an organized way to assist adults to gain knowledge or skills for vocational, cultural, or emotional betterment. The presentation of information, such as on TV or radio commercials, is not enough for it to be education. There has to be intent to help the individual.

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> It does not include sporadic activities, but it does include the application of educative principles and processes in a systematic way to any area of adult interest.

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> I consider it any learning experience that is designed for that purpose, the purpose of learning. I also extend that definition one step to include the performing of certain tasks in this context, such as learning on the job, committee meetings, and problem-solving groups.

Several of the interviewees in informal but planned educational programs appeared fearful that their activities would not be considered adult education by those in the universities or public schools. With but one exception this did not seem to be the case among our interviewees. One respondent felt that "Adult education is limited to programs in the adult schools" and could not see the relevance of either the work of the libraries or the Agricultural Extension Service to adult education. What was much more common, though still a minority view, was the suggestion that some of the oldest branches of formal adult education were not "really" part of the field. For example, a few did not consider vocational education a proper part of adult education because it was "training" while "education" consisted of "a change of concepts, a change of ideas." Others felt that adult education began only when a person had completed the standard education provided by our society, and consequently fundamental and literacy education should be excluded. And finally, several interviewees felt that all credit courses and most formal education were not really adult education. A similar position was taken by the U. S. Census Bureau in its report, "Participation in Adult Education,"[2] where formal credit courses were not counted as adult education activities.

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[2] Circular No. 539, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1959.

Other interviewees mentioned the motives of the recipient of adult education, the necessity for the process to be continuing throughout life, and social purpose as the distinguishing characteristics of adult education. These criteria, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter X, present a somewhat different approach as illustrated by the following comments.

> It should concentrate on making citizens responsible and participating. It includes action, too. I would define adult education as the group study of group problems with a view to group action.

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> Adult education has a social purpose. We live in a certain structure or milieu which is not static. It is changing. Educators have to be leaders. They have to give people a sense of judgement, enable them to see things in a broader frame of reference. There is an obligation to help people know what they are doing and to do it better. This is not to tell them what to think but how to think.

The foregoing discussion has emphasized the diversity of conceptions of adult education found among those interviewed in order to indicate that a problem exists and to illustrate the views of those in opposing camps. Nonetheless, in order to build a program for any national organization concerned with the development and expansion of adult education in our society, it is necessary to discover whether there is any consensus among the leaders as to what adult education now is. Only then can its present needs, and probable future trends, and their meaning be even tentatively assessed and their development planned.

Despite the nuances discussed, it appears to the authors that a working consensus is beginning to emerge. About two-thirds of the interviewees probably would agree to the following formulation: Adult education consists of all purposeful planned activities for adults, formal or informal, of an educational nature which aid individuals as persons or as group members to increase vocational competence, to live more interesting and effective lives as persons, and to increase their capacity to understand social and political issues and participate intelligently in resolving them. Further, this definition is intended to include remedial education, vocational education, and formal credit work except in those cases where the participant is devoting full time to such education.[3] If this approximate definition of a majority of the interviewees should command comparable support from the membership, it sets tentative boundaries within which the AEA can function in planning its programs of service, publication, and research.

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[3] With the exception of the inclusion of part-time credit courses, the range of activities here included corresponds very closely to those utilized by the U. S. Census. Op. cit., p. 2.

Chapter II

THE ADULT EDUCATOR, HIS GRATIFICATIONS, PROBLEMS AND HOPES

This chapter examines the adult educator at work in his field, who he is, the satisfactions that are his, the handicaps against which he struggles, the problems he sees he must solve, and the hopes he has for his chosen field of service in the decade of the 1960's. It leans heavily on the data and comments supplied by some 80[1] interviewees but includes some appropriate data from the questionnaires. A later chapter will consider this adult educator as a member of his national organization, the AEA, and will present data as to the characteristics and composition of its membership.

The picture of the adult educator which emerges from this chapter must be seen against the background in which adult education functions. Almost universally adult education operates in an institutional setting, and typically within its sponsoring institutions it is a relatively recent activity. This limits its freedom to develop as an independent institution would, imposes restrictions both in program development and in financial support, and results in what Clark well calls the marginality of adult education.[2] The problems with which the adult educator must cope therefore involve both those inherent in the discipline and its field, and those which involve achieving status within powerful parent institutions that have many other and older interests, some of which have become entrenched social subsystems. This situation influences both the adult educator's expressed hopes and the image he has of the gratifications and satisfactions his work produces.

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[1] Interviews with former or non-members and with executives or board members of other organizations about their organizations are not included.

[2] Burton R. Clark, Adult Education in Transition, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1956.

Career Lines

Many persons now prominent in adult education entered the field "by the back door" as interviewees frequently put it. Some more or less accidental responsibility introduced them to adult education and they found the experience sufficiently interesting and rewarding to remain in the work. Frequently the first contact with adult education came through teaching a course in university extension or a public school system's evening program, a responsibility often accepted simply for increased income but one that yielded unexpected psychological dividends resulting in a life career.[3]

In many respects university extension has been the most stable area of adult education so far as our interviewees are representative of leadership in the field. Four out of five in this category began by teaching or assisting in the administration of the extension program and are now deans, directors or assistant directors of the program in their universities. All but one of the few currently holding such posts who did not come up through their universities, had been in industry in public relations or personnel posts.

Half the interviewees who began adult education when serving as teachers in public high schools have remained in public education work and for the most part are variously titled administrators of adult education in urban school systems. On the other hand, persons who began their adult education careers in public schools have gone into many other aspects of such work. Four have become university professors. Industry, private agencies, including one foundation, and agricultural extension have each received two or three former school adult educators. Workers' education, the cooperative movement, and university extension are among the other fields into which public school people have gone. This finding is not surprising. As adult education grew the public schools in the aggregate possessed more persons with some experience in the field than any other agency. It was a natural recruiting ground for others, and a majority of the fields into which public school adult educators went doubtless appeared to offer larger compensation and/or more prestige and security.

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[3] One result of this is a relatively high average age for adult educators.

Except that the four librarians among the interviewees have spent their entire professional careers in library work, the remainder have come from widely varying backgrounds and experiences. The interest of one in adult education dated from his having to write a term paper about it when an undergraduate. Teaching, library work, service as an urban adult education council executive and now in a national organization followed in this individual's career.

One of those to be chosen as president of the AEA, while doing graduate work in one of the so-called learned professions, was chosen for an administrative post in the evening program of his school, became its dean and then, following field service in adult education for a national agency, once more became a dean and then a professor of adult education.

Case work for the Social Security Administration, and personnel work in a large industry was followed in another case by the directorship of extension in a university with a long and distinguished program in this field. The interest of another well-known adult educator in the field was aroused by the discussions of a road gang of which he was a member. He was impressed both by the intelligence and the meagre advantages and education of his fellow workers. From then on in college and graduate work he focused on adult education and pursued it as a career in one of the Y's, in an adult counselling program and currently as an executive in a national organization much concerned with adult education. Agencies set up by the government during the depression, such as the Works Progress Administration and the National Youth Administration, are responsible for having sent other workers into adult education careers. Others came from the fields of social work and religious education. A few became employed workers after an experience as volunteers.

This heterogeneous background of professional adult educators, together with the frequent changes in positions held by many interviewees, are some of the marks of a young profession, or perhaps it should rather be said, of a profession in process of becoming. The pioneers who founded the American Association for Adult Education in 1925 were not trained adult educators. No one was in those days. They came from many fields of endeavor, drawn together by their experiences, sometimes as volunteers, by their perception of needs and by their vision of what adult education might mean to American society. The first professor of adult education was appointed only a generation ago and it was some years before he had any colleague in the field.

The youth of adult education as an organized and recognized area of human endeavor is one clue to some of the problems in the field and some of the difficulties that the AEA has had in determining upon its objectives. As is discussed in some detail in Chapter XI, some of the practitioners in the field are anxious to strengthen adult education as a profession, to enhance its prestige in American society and eliminate the marginal position adult education holds in many agencies and school systems. Progress toward such objectives seems to some to involve raising standards of performance among participants and of preparation among practitioners. On the other hand there are those, remembering perhaps the early leaders or themselves untrained save by experience, who dread professionalization as endangering the spirit and vitality of adult education and who would welcome the volunteer on the same level as the professional.

However this issue is eventually decided, and it will be discussed elsewhere in this report in other connections, the fact remains that adult education has made a forceful enough appeal to many people to cause them to change their careers. Even in the public schools and universities no interviewee began his career as a teacher of adults. Typically his first experience as such took only a fraction of his energy and time. Full commitment came later. Quite evidently, therefore, what went on was a process through which the attraction of the former professional field declined and the appeal of work in adult education grew in strength. It is unlikely that economic rewards played much part in the decision of interviewees to become full-time adult educators. Rather, the uniqueness and challenge of the activity drew them. There are hints of this in what the interviewees told us, even though for the most part they dwelt on current gratifications. What are these?

Gratifications of the Adult Educator

The answer to this question was provided by the interviewees themselves. The image of the adult educator which emerges from their comments shows him to be a very human person with an interest in people as people, who enjoys personal contacts and working with people either in solving a problem or in achieving some broader objective. Such an individual gets great satisfaction in seeing the participants in his program grow in knowledge, understanding, analytical ability, ease in discussion or skill. Over half of the interviewees mentioned items that could be classified as above. Indeed, one in seven frankly stated that they supposed they should admit that they had a missionary feeling with respect to adult education and that their gratifications from their service would be akin to those of a successful missionary.

Said one:

> I probably have a missionary complex. The development of human potentialities excites me. Adult education does this.

Another put it thus:

> It's not that I want to sound like a starry eyed idealist, but there is a gratification in making a contribution, no matter how small, to a more enlightened citizenry.

A number said very simply that their basic gratification was "working with people and observing their growth," but appreciation is clearly one element in this, as the following quotations show:

> There is the tremendous satisfaction one gets in working with adults, a great sense of appreciation. They are in school because they want to be. . . . The big thing in adult education is the relationship between the adult educator and the individual.

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> Gratifications? The feeling of the importance of it to the adults. The things they tell me it means to them! . . . Housewives who spend all day at home changing diapers will say, "I haven't done this sort of thing since college. It's so good to get away for a while and get some mental stimulation." Some of the men are delighted just with puttering around the shop. It gives them a chance to relax and reduce tensions. . . . The sheer enthusiasm of people impresses me. And it is wonderful to get people to think more carefully about their problems. Then there is the person who is so happy to get a job after taking courses here. One woman who took a course in stenography came up to me and said: "I got a job. I actually got a job. I never thought I'd learn enough to get this kind of job."

Working with people and seeing them grow is clearly the most frequently expressed and inclusive satisfaction adult educators have from their activities.

Something over a fourth of the interviewees get real pleasure from their duties in program development, especially when some pioneering or experimental activity is involved, or in some cases where the program relates especially to community development through adult educational means.

> There is a fascination in what we look upon as a growing field with never a time when we don't have new ideas or experimental programs. There is a special fascination in ferreting out the needs and interests of adults and then trying to meet them. Because they are not articulate there is the challenge of program development.

Several persons valued "the opportunity to experiment. There is real satisfaction in trying things that haven't ever been done." The challenge of activities not yet routinized and of the possibility of change, mentioned by several, is akin to this.

Another put this point in terms of contrast with childhood education:

> I get most satisfaction working with people who are in a position to make changes in society. This isn't true when you teach children. There's more sharing in planning, more group thinking in adult education, that makes it interesting.

There is a deep satisfaction in seeing adult education result in considered action or become an important influence in bringing about a desirable social change. Consider for instance this:

> Adult education in our city was desegregated about three years before the Supreme Court decision. We had many mixed classes both in vocational and in liberal adult education. There were no incidents, even of the most trivial sort. When the decision came and local neighborhood groups or PTA's began studying the problem as an adult education experience, participants in our desegregated program of the previous years were very helpful in convincing our people that desegregation need not be feared.

The third greatest source of satisfaction these adult educators experienced was the consciousness that in terms of the needs of our society they were "participating in the most important area of education today." Explaining, one of them quoted the title of a book of the mid-1920's, saying: "It is still a race between education and catastrophe."

Gratifications, of course, varied according to the responsibilities and field of the interviewee. The university professors, for instance, all emphasized their gratification in the sense that they were helping to build a profession and one which was growing and of great potential importance. They also took satisfaction in the jobs their students got. Again, the educational director of a trade association in effect spoke for several such when he said, "I get my biggest kick making managers of our industries become increasingly aware of their functions and responsibilities as educators."

It was interesting that few of the interviewees mentioned gratifications that might be considered selfish by some. One person perhaps somewhat uneasily approached such a position in saying:

> There is some sense of power and control in finding what might be of interest to people and how to help them, but I don't mean this in the wrong sense of power.

A university professor spoke incidentally of enjoying his freedom in the work he did. Several persons indicated that they felt their own personal growth was a plus item in their experience as adult educators. Two or three working in communities where adult education has long been favorably known and well established gained satisfaction from "meeting the top people" and holding "a high status post."

Perhaps these persons were a bit franker than others. Clearly, however, the gratifications of the adult educator are those of a devoted, not to say dedicated, group of people completely confident of the value and importance of what they are doing. This does not, of course, mean that they are free of difficulties and problems.

Handicaps and Problems of Adult Educators

The problems listed by adult educators naturally reflect both the situation of the interviewee or respondent in terms of his community or institution and also the specific position he holds in adult education. The inquiry with respect to the problems faced by respondents to the questionnaire was open ended. Replies varied from a brief categorical listing of a few problems to several paragraphs.[4]

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[4] Interestingly only three-fifths of those returning questionnaires responded to the invitation to list their most difficult problems. In this section the word informants will be used when alluding to agreements of interviewees and respondents. These two groups will be differentiated only where the data show significant differences.

Among the interviewees and a large majority of full-time persons, what might be called the marginal status of adult education was clearly the most worrisome problem. This was seen to involve lack of status for adult educators, evidenced by the failure of top administrative personnel in education and of influential laymen in the community to accord to adult education the place its importance entitles it to hold. Deliberate toleration rather than whole-hearted acceptance was complained of, together with "adverse" pay scales and the exclusion of adult educators in some cases from such fringe benefits as participation in pension funds, recognized sick leave and the like. Such complaints were voiced by about half of the interviewees and an equal proportion, with some overlapping, specifically criticized their too limited budgets in relation to their opportunities for service. It is noteworthy that these problems were voiced disproportionately by interviewees administering public school adult education programs, some of whom also felt handicapped by the type of facilities available for their programs.

If to those struggling with these problems are added the few people who indicated their chief difficulty was "sheer administrative conservatism and stupidity," it is apparent that over two-thirds of our interviewees have difficulties along the lines just described.

Largely because of differences in their responsibilities, the respondents to the questionnaire were somewhat less concerned with problems of this type, less than 40 per cent listing them, and more than half of these complained chiefly of inadequate financial support.

Many of the comments concretize these problems.

> The adult education administrator has to be a hypocrite operationally speaking. He's supposed to be an educator but his superior considers his program simply as a money making device.

This attitude is, of course, responsible for what Clark calls "the enrollment economy,"[5] which as many interviewees indicated, makes the planning of an educational program that will develop new offerings as new needs arise very difficult, especially if the financial situation is at all tight. "You always have to compromise with what you think best." Said one administrative officer of a program generally considered successful:

> There's always competition from other educators for funds. The day school teachers' groups will knife adult education every time in a crisis. Adult education is tolerated, not accepted.

Administrative problems, another interviewee pointed out, sometimes stem from outmoded legislation.

> By law we are called evening schools even though we now have a large daytime program. And by law all our non-vocational offerings have to be put under recreation!

But even without such a handicap,

> With public school systems a most difficult problem is to get an awareness on the part of one's superiors and peers that the value of adult education is equal to the value of education for youth. Moreover, your peers don't recognize that you have to teach in a different way than they do.

It must in fairness be recognized that there are obvious reasons for the lack of rapport between adult education and other staff members in the same institution. The former work at irregular hours, frequently at night, and often serve students uninterested in conventional academic credit. Many of them are part-time. There is little or no opportunity for the two groups to become acquainted. Indeed, it is often difficult for part-time personnel to get to know their own faculty colleagues. The factors which create this situation are frequently inherent in any large adult education program. They are handicaps, perhaps, but surprisingly few respondents and proportionately fewer interviewees mentioned such considerations as personal problems affecting their work.

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[5] Clark, op. cit.

There was consensus among informants as to other problems, chief of which is the traditional attitude of many of the public and even of educational administrators that education is something confined to children and youth, and the belief that adults lack either the ability or the time to accept the need for continuing education. Into this familiar area fall the related problems of motivation, stimulating interest in a program or promotion. About one-fourth of the informants list this as a problem area, and half as many are concerned with the competition of other activities, ranging from night work where facilities for a day program are unavailable to "spectatoritis."

The educational director of a large voluntary agency made a significant comment on this point.

> So much of adult education is based on the assumption that people want to learn. But we have not yet found the solution to the problem of motivating them [if they are apathetic], except for selfish motivations such as getting a better job.

Another problem which concerns one-sixth of the informants is that of securing, motivating and generally training and holding a competent staff or faculty. This is a problem at all levels and in all types of adult education agencies, public and private, and was mentioned by most of those with responsibilities for staff selection and training. If comparable problems in terms of volunteers are considered, another 12 per cent of the questionnaire respondents indicate such problems.

To some extent the problem here is the familiar one of recruiting persons to fill adult education posts, which because of the necessity for most activities to be conducted at night, raises problems daytime opportunities do not, especially among the agencies which make large use of volunteers. The problem goes deeper than this, however, as the following quotations show:

> Another problem is working with the faculty to have them treat adults as adults and yet maintain standards.
>
> - - - - -
>
> It's a problem to get some teachers to respect the integrity of the individual as a mature person.
>
> - - - - -
>
> It's difficult to develop an understanding on the part of the faculty of the real needs of people who don't conform to the requirements of a college catalog.

One perhaps more philosophically inclined administrator said,

> It is difficult to convey adult education ideals to the staff. It takes a long time to realize one's hopes.

It will be recalled that one of the satisfactions of the interviewees in their adult education work was program building. Perhaps this is why relatively few of them list program planning as one of their problems. In this they differ markedly from the respondents to the questionnaire, one-fifth of whom encountered problems with program development, fitting programs to the needs of their constituents and preparing or securing interesting courses and materials. A few persons also found the evaluating of what had been done a real problem.

One interviewee of considerable experience raised a familiar issue on this point.

> Programming for the adult mind is one problem. You have to be sensitive to adult learning needs as over against what we adult educators perceive them to be. The problem is how to touch them with programs that bring about an opening of the mind.

Only 6 per cent of the informants expressed concern over lack of cooperation among agencies. This may be a hopeful sign, indicating a declining proportion of empire builders in adult education. The problem has been commented on in another connection in this chapter. Suffice it ~~here to say~~ that where a respondent expanded on the mere listing of competition as a problem, the tenor of the comments was not a counterclaim for his agency but a plea that all adult education agencies see themselves in relation to all others and work for the advancement of the whole field.

Some of the interviewees looked behind the familiar problems that have been listed, and with frank and healthy self-criticism asked if the adult educators were not themselves problems in the development of the field. This mood was rarely detected among the respondents but in one way or another emerged in 10 per cent of the interviews.

One of the most distinguished and perceptive interviewees put it this way:

> Another problem is ourselves, keeping ourselves creative. As adults we are stereotyped. We have to rouse our dormant understanding and creativity. Allied with this is the problem of conformity and acceptance of mediocrity of thinking and of substandard ways of life and education.

A more impatient interviewee exploded:

> The problem is the adult educators themselves. They can't see beyond their noses, they can't sell themselves, they can't internalize the motives they present to others.

The challenge in the last clause of the quotation from this angry man is the reason for including the comment. Another interviewee may perhaps offer a clue. He said:

> The low status of adult education is a problem for which adult educators are partly responsible. They either indulge in unrealistic adulation of adult education as a panacea for all personal and social ills or they see a highly limited role for it. They should use their own techniques to improve their relations with the community.

Another who was inclined to believe that adult educators contributed to their own problems explained this by saying, "We're too apt to trust a single method, a mystique--group dynamics, for instance."

Another interviewee saw part of the difficulty with adult education in the pressure under which its practitioners worked and the lack of "depth exchange of experience," explained as follows:

> It is not enough for us to tell one another we tried this or that and got x number of students. We need to discuss how we set up the program and why, the methods we used in the class or group and what came out of them, good or bad, and what leads we found for further experiment.

Finally, several interviewees maintained quite simply that most of the problems of adult educators stemmed from the fact that:

> We just aren't clear ourselves as to what adult education is. There is a great lack of clarity, therefore, in our operations.

About 70 per cent of the respondents would agree with this comment.

Several comments may be made in connection with these last few quotations. There can be no doubt as to the capacity and ability of most of the leaders in the adult education field. At the same time it is well known that any new movement or important group in the process of institutionalization attracts persons who have failed to achieve psychological and/or economic satisfactions in other fields, and who see the new development as a way of escape or advancement.[6] With the rapid growth of adult education and the need for operating personnel, it was inevitable that some such persons should find places in adult education.

As one of the most informed and widely known national leaders said:

> In the early stages of the development of adult education programs in some institutions there was a tendency for professional roles to be filled by people who couldn't measure up to those in other roles. A lot of these misfits have stayed in adult education because they were fairly safe. They are now looked down on by their colleagues and consequently have become hostile and defensive. There has been some tension owing to this.

A statewide leader of some experience bluntly charged that:

> School administrators put incompetents into the adult education programs.

To the extent to which these two judgements are accurate, they are an explanation of some of the problems of adult education. Coupled with this is the permissive character or philosophy that dominates the field, especially with reference to program building, but which intrudes into administration and appears to have resulted in an almost ritualistic degree of self-analysis and self-criticism to an extent in some places, including the AEA itself, that it impedes the operation of the program.

Finally, there is the fact that many persons engaged in adult education, especially if on a part-time basis, are so engaged from a wide variety of motives, some of which, like the motives of participants in the programs, may have little or nothing to do with adult education.[7] Their attitude toward the enterprise under such circumstances is bound to be different from that of full-time supervisory or administrative personnel. The fact that of the estimated 90,000 persons in the adult education programs of public schools, less than 3,000 belong to NAPSAE is one indication of this, and admittedly many of the subject matter instructors in university extension do not consider themselves adult educators. As one extension director said, "They'd be surprised no end if you told them they were."

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[6] This became a problem raised to the nth degree for administrators in some of the emergency organizations set up so quickly in the early days of the New Deal. These administrators, however, had the protection of Civil Service and/or professional standards. The equivalent did not exist in some adult education agencies.

Without minimizing the importance of the problem from the point of view of a generalized adult education association, it must be pointed out that some of the criticism is based on considerations many of those criticized would not accept as applicable.

The comments of the respondents on their adult education problems were coded into about three dozen categories. Only five of these were mentioned by from 12 to 26 per cent of those replying to this question. Fourteen others were noted by from 5.1 to 9.8 per cent of the respondents. The others were all below 4.7 per cent. All of these first five and some of the second group have already been specifically alluded to. An effort was made to see whether the type of problems experienced by adult educators in carrying out their work varied according to their area of activity or the type of institution they served.[8] Because of the large number of categories drawing only a small response it was necessary to combine the total number of problems into six categories. Even on this basis some interesting differences emerge. Administrative problems and attitudes are the chief headache of adult educators who have full-time positions in the field. These are in second place for part-time and volunteer workers whose primary concern lies in the area of recruiting and of overcoming public apathy. Teaching problems are in third place for all groups. Tables 1 and 2 give the details on some of the facts in this and the next paragraphs.

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[7] Edmund deS. Brunner and others, An Overview of Adult Education Research, Chicago: Adult Education Association, 1959, chaps. 3 and 6.

[8] So far as the authors know this tabulation of various types of problems as practicing adult educators see them is unique. For this reason and because people often seek help in solving their problems and in this case might turn to a generalized, national adult education organization for assistance, this list of problems and the percentage of respondents mentioning each are given in Appendix C.

When the problems mentioned are related to the agencies in which respondents worked, some of the variations reflect differences between tax-supported and voluntary agencies. Thus, from two-thirds to three-fourths of respondents from religious organizations, voluntary library groups and labor unions struggled with recruitment and public apathy. Colleges, public schools and university extension were least concerned with these problems. On the other hand, from two-thirds to three-fourths of the university extension and public school personnel recognized administrative problems, as did three-fifths of those from the colleges. These bothered less than one-half the respondents from churches, agricultural extension, health, welfare and youth serving agencies.

The last three of these agency categories in the same order stood at the top in their concerns over teaching and student relations, with 44 per cent listing this group of problems, three times the proportion among the librarians and approaching double the proportion among workers in public schools and labor unions. Thirty-seven per cent of workers in churches, colleges and university extension also listed this problem.

Table 1: Summary Problems of Adult Educators with Positions in Adult Education by Type of Position*

	Type of position				
Summary problems	All of full-time paid	Part of full-time paid	Part-time paid	Volunteer or unpaid	Total
Apathy and recruiting	53%	62%	56%	57%	58%
Teaching	37	35	40	27	35
Administration	66	49	54	46	54
Marginality and newness of the field	19	13	11	8	14
Personal problems	2	4	13	7	5
Other problems	9 186%**	6 169%	8 182%	9 154%	8 174%
Base of %	(451)	(644)	(111)	(171)	(1377)

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*Those who did not answer the problems question are excluded from this table.

**Totals exceed 100% because respondents mentioned more than one type of problem.

Table 2: Summary Problems of Adult Educators by Primary Agency for Selected Agencies*

Summary problems	Public school	Agri. ext.	Univ. ext.	Other coll., univ.	Church or relig.	Health or welfare	Libraries	Business, industry	Labor union	Youth serving	Civic or frat.
Apathy and recruiting	51%	58%	39%	52%	69%	61%	72%	60%	75%	64%	61%
Teaching	25	45	36	37	37	44	15	42	25	44	30
Administration	73	43	69	60	46	42	52	50	50	42	55
Marginality and newness of the field	20	8	27	25	5	7	18	12	6	3	7
Personal problems	5	3	4	7	4	4	7	2	—	1	11
Other problems	6 180%**	10 167%	7 182%	10 191%	3 164%	6 164%	3 167%	12 178%	12 168%	7 161%	9 173%
Base of f	(238)	(93)	(135)	(126)	(147)	(137)	(67)	(48)	(16)	(126)	(44)

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*Those who did not answer the questions concerning either problems or agency are excluded from this table.

**Totals exceed 100% because respondents mentioned more than one type of problem.

The marginality and alleged low status of adult education were of little concern to respondents from over half of the groups. Less than one in twelve of the respondents from agricultural extension, health and welfare, civic agencies, unions, religious and youth serving agencies mentioned it. On the other hand, from one-fifth to over one-fourth of those from public schools, colleges and university extension mentioned low status as a problem.[9] Possibly this is a problem felt more keenly by wives and children than by the adult educator himself.

The results are in line with expectations. Participants in adult education programs in universities, colleges and public schools must register for courses and frequently must pay tuition. One would expect such institutions to be less concerned about public apathy than many others and, conversely, more concerned about administration and the prestige of the unit or division. Even so, this last problem enjoyed the attention of less than one-third as many as noted administrative problems.

The authors would make a final comment at this point relating to an area of concern barely hinted in the data collected, doubtless because the questions asked did not call it out, but one which a national agency of adult education might be compelled to consider, and perhaps to act upon. It involves this question: Does an adult educator whose job it is to insure study and debate of controversial issues surrender the right to take a partisan position in politics? If so, does this worry him? And what are the implications for him if free speech, communication or institutions are endangered?

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[9] The occupational categories used were schools, colleges, university extension, agricultural extension, business and industry, health and welfare, civic and fraternal, youth serving, religious, library, labor unions. All others were also tabulated but appeared too diverse to use. Categories not mentioned in any of the preceding numbers fell between the extremes given.

The Future of the Field

Regardless of the problems with which adult educators struggle, they are supremely confident that their field will experience tremendous growth during the 1960's. Half the respondents "agree strongly" with this statement and over two-fifths simply "agree." Only 1 per cent disagree. The rest conservatively record themselves as uncertain. Population growth is one reason given for this optimistic attitude, but only one.

The interviewees were also optimistic. One-third of them forecast growth in enrollments, offerings and participation without qualification as to the type of program or the agency offering it.

Quite typical of this body of opinion are the following comments:

> We're going to see a realization on the part of more people that education is a continuing process. As the educational level of the country rises the number who want especially education of the non-credit type will increase.

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> There will be a steady increase of adult education for all levels of adults because of the shorter work week and the growing importance of education in all our lives. There will be a steady growth both of formal and informal organizations in adult education: schools, colleges, churches, YMCA's, etc. National organizations will attempt to improve the quality of their adult education.

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> Adult education will continue to expand, including educational TV. More and more people will take extension courses and go to night schools. The idea of a cutting line in education will change so that education will be seen as a continuing process throughout life. This will be influenced by our political history, by demands raised by TV, by our race with Russia and the changes brought by science--all giving people more interest in learning.

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> Adult education will become stronger with the rising educational level of the population and the rapid changes in technology and society. The man who succeeds will recognize his need for it and demand it. The marginal position of adult education in our schools will disappear.

The other three-fifths of the interviewees, while also optimistic, were more selective in terms of the nature and auspices of the expected expansion in adult education, inferentially denying that it would be shared in general by all operating agencies. This group of interviewees tended to think more largely, though not exclusively, in institutional rather than in program terms. This tendency is doubtless a function of the positions they held in adult education. As a result, while optimistic, there is disagreement among them as to the nature and quality of the expected expansion.

Well over a fourth of the interviewees expect adult education to acquire a more substantial content with increased offerings in "liberal," "social," "interpersonal," "perhaps even spiritual" subjects. This will be particularly true in programs sponsored by business organizations where "there is increasing recognition of the need of a far broader background among supervisors and especially executives." Conversely, in part because of automation, there will be less attention to adult vocational education and probably to recreation.

A minority disagree strongly. Sample comments expressing these viewpoints follow:

> Especially in the schools less time will be given to general and liberal education, and because automation will deprive people of jobs there will be a great expansion in vocational education.

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> Adult education will be less vocational, more liberal as a result of our luxury society. It will be more in the direction of a more interesting leisure than for economic advancement.

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> There will be a great broadening of the field to keep abreast vocationally.

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> There will be a tremendous expansion in liberal arts and humanities programs. With our rising educational level adult education will become a program providing people what they missed in college.

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> The adult educator will have to help upgrade people from vocational to other forms of adult education.

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> The new approach being taken in vocational and professional education will expand; for example, engineers discussing their role in society, not just skills.

Another difference of opinion among our interviewees relates to the auspices under which the expected expansion in adult education will occur. One in six, or perhaps more accurately about one in four of those who qualified their responses, expects the expansion to be primarily in tax-supported institutions, especially the schools, "since schools should be the center of all adult education" and since "private agencies are definitely contracting." However, especially those concerned with such institutions expect the expansion to take place in state colleges and universities or junior colleges and libraries.

Half as many interviewees have exactly opposite expectations. Because of the necessity for economy, not to say budget reductions, among all tax-supported institutions and because of the marginal position of adult education in them, "the coming growth in adult education offerings and popular participation will be primarily in the voluntary organizations." It should be added, however, that there is a considerable expectation of increased governmental support, some including federal aid in this judgement, among adult educators, expecially those in tax-supported agencies.

Representative quotations below reveal the strength of institutional thinking among some interviewees.

> Nationally the education of adults will be accepted as a responsibility of the public schools.

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> Voluntary organizations will provide much more of the formalized education for adults.

- - - - -

> Library administrators will accept the responsibility for the education of adults.

- - - - -

> The public schools should be the center of adult education, whether in skills or cultural matters.

The final comment comes from a nationally known leader who has been highly successful in developing adult education in the public schools of his city.

> University extension will be more and more important. Junior and community colleges will upgrade adult education. The public schools will develop a more liberal curriculum within limitations. These agencies must serve, not attempt to build empires.

It is to be hoped that this last point of view will prevail among the leaders and practitioners of adult education and that it can be furthered by the AEA. The increase in population mentioned by many certainly indicates potential increases in enrollment. The gain in the educational achievement of the American people is marked and cannot but have some influence on adult education both in terms of content and

and in terms of the acceptable quality of instruction. Both these factors should be receiving more attention from policy makers and in terms of research from professors of adult education. There is, however, no guarantee that our educational status will continue to gain at the rate it did during the 1940's. It may have reached a plateau, as it has at some periods in the past.[10]

Neither of these factors, however, warrants the assumption by any institution that social trends will enable it to improve its competitive position. Automation will not end the interest of adults in literature, art, or any other aspects of liberal education, nor are such trends likely to alter greatly the proportion of people whose primary loyalties are to church, or school, or library, or evening college, or other institution. Such loyalties grow out of social ties that are independent of adult education considerations. If a familiar institution cannot or does not meet some need, individuals may seek elsewhere and as a result may or may not form new and strong social ties.[11]

In the sort of society which exists in the United States, any social institution with a concern for adult education is free to enter the field. Some will have more prestige than others and more experience with education, but it would appear dangerous, certainly unrealistic, for the officer of any institution to look forward to have adult education "center" in his agency. The potentialities for growth in adult education can probably be most effectively realized by at least a modicum of cooperation among the operating agencies to advance the field as a whole. The need for this would seem to be indicated by the large measure of insecurity or marginality discussed earlier in this chapter. Promoting such cooperation could well be one function for a national, generalized agency in adult education.

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[10] Sloan Wayland and Edmund deS. Brunner, The Educational Characteristics of the American People, New York: Teachers College Bureau of Publications, 1958.

[11] Abbott Kaplan, A Study of the Liberal Arts Program for Adults in the Metropolitan Los Angeles Area, White Plains, N. Y.: Fund for Adult Education, 1958, dittoed.

A few persons looked forward to such cooperation among agencies, though almost as many expected greater competition. Cooperation, three interviewees felt, might bring agreed upon differentiation of functions in adult education among universities, junior colleges and schools, each doing what was most appropriate for it in terms of staff and resources.

Another case of contrasting opinions with respect to the future concerned the degree of professionalization in adult education. Most persons who commented on this point looked for an expansion in university training for the field and in the number of positions that would become available. Others believed that "the future of the field may be in the hands of laymen who don't know John Dewey from Tom Dewey but are already doing some of the most exciting work."

It is perhaps in order to point out that as with a number of these forecasts both points of view may be correct. The colleges of agriculture, for instance, are not going to abandon their volunteer leaders, nor will the Great Books Foundation and other agencies. But this will not prevent the development of a professionally trained group of workers in the field. Indeed, some of the needs as seen by both members and interviewees, such as the great demand for research, cannot be met without a development of adult education in universities. A national agency might adjust to the presence and needs of both such groups. Both are already present in adult education. They serve different functions. They are not competitive but complementary.

One other comment seems in order. Clearly the opportunities for graduate and professional training in adult education are likely to increase. It is to be hoped that this will not proportionately reduce the number of volunteers. Except for some use of volunteers in parent education, more recently in the Great Books groups and a few other situations, and notably for close to half a century in agricultural and home economics extension where volunteers have long been counted by the many hundreds of thousands annually, there seems to be a danger that progress may be equated with supplanting the volunteer by the professional. The experience of an organization like the Extension Service, with its highly trained professional personnel, in understanding and utilizing both the volunteer and voluntary action could profitably be studied by a highly urbanized agency like the AEA and made available. It might be added that if those who look for increased tax support of adult education are correct, it will come more quickly and easily if the professionals seek ways to strengthen voluntary lay participation, involvement and control. This is abundantly proven by many experiences of the Extension Service.

Returning now to the remaining prophecies by interviewees about the 1960's, we find no more generally shared expectations. One in seven of the interviewees enthusiastically foresaw a greater use of television by adult educators, and a couple added a more intelligent use of this medium. Half as many looked forward to an expansion of adult education for the aging. Thus an expanded use of a technique of communication and the more effective inclusion of a special population group in adult education's service have some prominence in thinking of the future, although to the authors by a surprisingly small proportion of the interviewees.

A few people who had already experienced a shift of adult education offerings into daytime hours or into week-end or short term residential activity, and especially short courses or workshops, look forward to developments along these lines.

Only one in ten of the interviewees suggested any relation between the changes they anticipated in adult education and the role of a generalized national organization in the field. Even among so few persons agreement was lacking. To some, problems of methods and techniques will become more acute with the looked for expansion in the field. The need for analysis of these and for dissemination of experiences with them, and of the expected increasing body of knowledge about adult education to come from research, is seen as presenting a real challenge to the AEA. Two people in this small group, however, would confine the service of the AEA to private agencies and assign to the National Education Association the servicing and leadership of all adult education through public agencies.

This last suggestion will hardly be embraced with enthusiasm by adult educators in university extension, agricultural and home economics extension, and public libraries. It is worth noting here only because it is symptomatic of narrow institutional thinking displayed on occasion by a minority of the interviewees but sufficiently often to acquire some significance.

If adult education is ever to rid itself of its marginal status, of which a disproportionate number of schoolmen complained, and achieve a climate of opinion favorable to its development, considerations of agency prestige and interagency rivalry were well suppressed or resolved.

Thus far this discussion has dealt with fairly large areas of consensus among anywhere from over half the interviewees down to half a dozen. But as always happens in such a process, interviewers turned up a few persons who for one reason or another had been thinking seriously along the line of the questions before the interview took place. A few ideas expressed by such persons, while not echoed by others, seem to the authors sufficiently significant in terms of possible items in the AEA program to mention.

There was, for instance, the director of university extension who sees great possibilities, especially for state universities, in capitalizing on "the vast network of relationships with volunteer organizations" they now have to take on the training of volunteer leaders. Here, of course, especially agricultural and home economics extension have already pioneered for years. Perhaps such an activity and certainly many newer subjects lacking the appeal of, say, electronics, may call for inventiveness to secure financing, and here the active support of all adult educators may be needed.

Another leader felt strongly that:

> It is not only a problem of keeping adults up to date; it is also a problem of keeping our adult education curriculum abreast of advancing knowledge. The need for this will grow more acute since school education is likely to grow more general because knowledge is advancing so rapidly that training high school youth specifically may even be a

> disservice.[12] When this is realized it will result in a powerful impetus for life long education, whether the future brings increased leisure or not. And it is not likely to bring it to professional persons.

Some significant comments concerning university extension came from the chief educational officer of a large voluntary national organization who expects an expanding and worthwhile use of TV as an educational medium, both in terms of a greatly increased number and variety of courses, and by stimulating different types of activities by other agencies.

> Universities especially I see doing an entirely different kind of extension work. They will reach out to communities with problem solving help on such things as delinquency, segregation, community organization and development, and the multiple and complex problems of suburban communities.

Here again is an illustration of an adult education leader foreseeing a type of activity as developing generally which is already under way in some places. The Committee on Kentucky program, for instance, was taken over several years ago by the state university and on the rural side there are now about two-thirds of the states with rural extension sociologists serving communities along the lines indicated above.

Another perceptive comment came from a former president of a national adult education organization who accepts the optimistic forecasts of his fellow interviewees as to the growth of adult education. He believes, however, that this very growth may intensify interagency competition. "More agencies will be in on the act, . . . a plain out and out battle for bodies, a market situation." Indeed, this interviewee expects real competition within large institutions as between departments of a university.

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[12] This point was made frequently by industry executives in hearings held by President Roosevelt's Advisory Committee on Education in 1936.

> This conflict may not be a bad thing if it can be channelled toward progress. Here a national generalized adult education organization can make a real contribution. Under it as an umbrella people can meet, resolve and benefit from their conflicts. The approach to such a desirable resolution will probably be by looking together at their methods and probing to find underlying principles. Those interested in foreign relations, industrial relations or the Great Books all have methodological problems which may serve as a common ground. . . . The problem with conflict is the people who don't see the good of it.

The net impression emerging from both questionnaires and interviews is that of a youthful, developing, not to say embryonic profession with good morale and great confidence in its future, but one which because of both actual and potential conflicts sorely needs a national organization undominated by any group. One leader, a former president of the AEA, sums up the situation quite well:

> The conception of the field of adult education will broaden and hence it will gain more support both from government and private sources provided the leaders arrive at concrete, well defined goals in contrast to vague, all inclusive generalizations. This is a must and an immediate task.

Chapter III

AN OVERVIEW OF AEA HISTORY

While what today is recognized as adult education has been conducted in the United States for well over a century, the organized expression of the activity on a national scale is relatively recent, dating from 1926 when the American Association for Adult Education began to function.

Earlier in this decade the Carnegie Corporation (Foundation) had become impressed with the many diverse adult educational activities under such auspices as the public school, university extension, agricultural and home economics extension, evening colleges, libraries and other institutions. The Foundation was also convinced of the importance of, and the need and opportunities for adult education in American society. It was instrumental in convening a nation-wide conference in 1925 to consider the whole field and its needs. One outcome of this meeting was the organization of the association mentioned above. It was a membership body, largely supported by grants from the Foundation. It published a quarterly magazine, conducted or subsidized research and performed a clearing house function.

In 1921 the National Education Association, in response to national concern for the Americanization of immigrants, organized a Department of Immigrant Education. Initially its membership was made up of teachers of the foreign born and their administrators, largely in the public schools. Rechristened the Department of Adult Education in 1924, it amended its constitution three years later to permit any one engaged in teaching, supervising or administering adult education programs to join, whether employed by public or private agencies.

There were other national agencies engaged in specific aspects of adult education but these aspects related much more to the institutional auspices than to curriculum content. Thus university extensions, which began toward the end of the 19th century, found organized expression in the National University Extension Association, founded in 1915.

Later the Association of Evening Colleges, and the Adult Education Board of the American Library Association, organized in 1926, came into being. The latter has been renamed Adult Services Division. The passage of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, setting up the agricultural and home economics extension services, gave the state colleges of agriculture a large stake in rural adult education, and the field representatives of these two branches of extension each formed their own county agents' associations, independent of the Association of Land Grant Colleges.

Thus the organizational structure of adult education came to take shape. In addition, there are currently between 150 and 200 national organizations which employ educational means in the furtherance of their programs. Representative of these are the Foreign Policy Association, the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the League of Women Voters.

Knowledge of the relations among these various organizations and agencies, and particularly the relations between the general national organization, the American Association for Adult Education, and these various bodies as they changed and developed over the years, is very important to an understanding of the role of a generalized national agency in adult education in the 1960's, and especially to an appraisal of the Adult Education Association of the U.S.A. For this reason this chapter is devoted to a brief examination of the history of adult education organization, and particularly to a history of the Adult Education Association,[1] in so far as that history throws light on the present status of the AEA. The current problems and status of the AEA will be discussed in later chapters.

The expansion of the clientele of the Department of Adult Education of the National Education Association in 1927, as noted above, opened the opportunity both for possible competition for members and also for cooperation with the American Association for Adult Education. Over the years the relations between the two veered first in one direction, then in the other. Cooperation, for instance, was shown by grants by the American Association for Adult Education to the department which, despite the liberation of its membership requirements, was always more of a home for public school adult educators than a generalized national organization.

It should be noted in passing that the American Association for Adult Education made great contributions to adult education. It financed the well-known studies by the late Edward Thorndike dealing with adult learning and interests, a considerable series of studies in adult reading and readability, and an appraisal of the various areas of adult education in a series of over twenty studies in the late 1930's. It gave several score of fellowships for graduate training from which a number of present day leaders in the field profited, to mention only a few of its activities.

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[1] It should be stated frankly that the interpretations of some events in the history of the AEA as given both in this and other chapters, expressed by a number of interviewees, differ considerably. In other words, some of the important happenings are clothed in controversy. These disagreements are in themselves data and, where used, must be understood as such and not as judgements of the authors unless so stated. The following paragraphs are largely based on the official records of the AEA of some hundreds of pages, which have been chronologically assembled and bound under the title Founding Documents--1949-1951. Interview material throughout the report is indented and single spaced to aid identification.

Toward the end of World War II the American Association for Adult Education and the Department of Adult Education attempted unsuccessfully to achieve closer cooperation. In 1946 they and the National University Extension Association, the Adult Education Board of the American Library Association, and the Educational Film Library Association jointly planned and sponsored a national adult education conference. One outcome was the formation of a Joint Commission for the Study of Adult Education. By 1949 the purposes and programs of the American Association for Adult Education and the Department of Adult Education, and to some extent the membership overlapped to such an extent that the Joint Commission recommended that these two organizations form a Joint Committee to explore the possibility of greater cooperation. This suggestion was accepted and the Committee was charged "to study and make recommendations regarding the establishment of a single, new, overall adult education organization adequately representative of the entire adult education field."

The AEA Is Founded. This Committee met four times, the last meeting being a week long workshop in August, 1950, to which consultants from many areas of adult education were invited. The findings of this workshop formed the basis of planning for the AEA. In October, 1950, the governing bodies of the two organizations authorized the members of the Joint Committee to become an autonomous National Organizing Committee and replaced their separate journals by a single publication, Adult Education. After three further meetings of this group under its new name, the memberships of the American Association for Adult Education and the Department of Adult Education voted to dissolve these organizations in favor of the new national association, the Founding Assembly of which was held in May, 1951.

It is important to understand that the two organizations were neither merged nor consolidated. They were dissolved and a totally new organization with a new name, the Adult Education Association of the U.S.A., was formed. "It was felt that adult educators in public schools did not need a separate membership organization of their own, and that their special interests could be adequately cared for by representation of their areas of work in the policy making body," according to the minutes of the National Organizing Committee.

It is interesting to note that in many of the discussions leading up to the founding of the new organization, the concept was of a membership organization of adult educators. The name, Adult Education Association of the U.S.A., was adopted by the Founding Assembly on motion from the floor. It was recognized, however, that there were national organizations interested in adult education to the degree that they promoted their programs by educational means. Provision was made for organizational memberships, and originally an advisory council was proposed to provide for organizational interests. This was changed to a Council of National Organizations of the AEA which, like the Executive Committee and the Delegate Assembly, was to be an "organ of the Association."[2]

Initial Organizational Arrangements. The consummation of the new organization aroused enthusiasm and hope among the members of the Founding Assembly. True, the new body faced serious problems. Carnegie Foundation support had been withdrawn some years before. The operating budget would be small. On the other hand, two bodies that had sometimes seemed rivals had been dissolved and the field now had a single national association. Moreover, interested organizations and institutions came forward with substantial help in kind and to some extent with personnel. Cooper Union housed the CNO; Cleveland College, which had played host to the American Association for Adult Education for some years, took the office which was to deal with area organizations and conferences. The American Library Association gave space to the chief officer of the AEA who was to serve as coordinator. The National Education Association contributed the staff from their Department of Adult Education to handle professional and membership services. The National Education Association continued a Division of Adult Education to provide services but to have no separate members. The same staff served the Division and the AEA.

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[2] Article III, paragraph 1, Constitution of the Adult Education Association of the U. S. A.

Another reason for satisfaction with the results of the Founding Assembly lay in the form of organization determined upon in attempting to solve the problem of maintaining democratic control in a national organization. Rightly or wrongly, the image of the American Association for Adult Education which had grown up was of a highly centralized organization controlled by its director and a small in-group.[3] The new organization had succeeded in greatly decentralizing its personnel and services. In addition it provided for a Delegate Assembly to be elected by the membership under provisions which it was expected would give adequate and proportional representation to every region of the United States and every major adult education interest. Its creation of a

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[3] The fact that the dues of members played so small a part in the income of the American Association for Adult Education during the approximately fifteen years it enjoyed generous grants from the Carnegie Corporation doubtless helped create this image.

Council of National Organizations as one of the association's "organs" appeared for the first time to make effective arrangements for tying numerous bodies interested in the field into the national movement. Because of the scope and importance of the field a comparable Council of Public School Adult Education Administrators was provided for under the authority of Article III of the Constitution which permits the Delegate Assembly to authorize "sub-organizations composed of members of occupational, interest or geographical groups" as "organs of the association." As matters developed, however, the school interests in adult education found expression in the formation of a National Association of Public School Adult Educators. Its relations and those of the CNO to the AEA are discussed in a later chapter.

In retrospect many persons have come to see weaknesses in the organizational structure as determined by the Founding Assembly. It is doubtful, however, that the Assembly would have done differently even if efficiency experts had criticized the organizational chart or if sociologists who had studied social organization had foretold some of the problems which have arisen. Rather, to many the very fact of the limited budget and other problems helped to insure through the type of organization they seemed to make necessary the very democracy all hoped to achieve in the new organization. The subsequent difficulties are discussed elsewhere.

The AEA and the Fund for Adult Education. It is important now to record another development, totally unexpected by the committees that led up to the Founding Assembly, and the influence of that development upon the AEA. This development was the organization of the Fund for Adult Education by the Ford Foundation. The director of this Fund defined its purposes as follows in an article in the journal of the AEA[4]:

> The Fund is convinced that in the last analysis "face-to-face" participation in discussion is the most effective means of adult education. Therefore it is (1) providing various aids to discussion leaders and groups and (2) supporting several discussion programs conducted by existing organizations. Preliminary findings of the surveys currently in progress under fund auspices reveal that programs of adult education in the United States, numerous though they are, suffer from the lack of trained manpower and adequate funds.
>
> Assistance in planning programs for adult discussion groups and in leading such groups is much needed by laymen in the field. *The grant by the Fund to the new Adult Education Association will be used for the publication of a magazine designed to help non-professional people who are engaged in adult education work.* (Emphasis supplied)
>
> For professional adult educators, the Fund will provide a number of scholarships and fellowships.

The Fund for Adult Education had been formed only a few months before the AEA's Founding Assembly was held. Its primary purpose was to assist in the development of the liberal side of adult education in distinction from the remedial and vocational. It had large sums at its disposal.

During the meetings of the Founding Assembly the director of the Fund and one or two of his staff conferred with leaders of the AEA and offered to support appropriate projects, but indicated that no grants could be made for normal organizational operations. Thus in the first year of its life the AEA, which had been launched on a budget of less than $23,000 plus free office space and services worth approximately as much more, became the recipient of grants from the Fund for Adult Education of about $316,000, largely for publications as indicated in the quotation given above.

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[4] C. Scott Fletcher, "The Program of the Fund for Adult Education," *Adult Education*, vol. II, no. 2, Dec. 1951. The following paragraphs with respect to the relations of the AEA to the Fund for Adult Education are based on the records of the AEA and on the interviews held with adult education leaders. No effort has been made to compare the data thus secured with the records of the Fund for Adult Education. What is important in this study is the image AEA leaders have of the Fund for Adult Education episode in the history of their association, since it is this which influences present policy.

This, to quote an interviewee, "made the organizational chart look like a tooth pick supporting many heavy branches." On the basis of this argument the Fund for Adult Education eventually made a grant for general support and for the program of the CNO, though the largest sums continued to go for publication, especially the new magazine, Adult Leadership. The 1954 annual report of the AEA notes that the budget was approximately $400,000--a sum slightly exceeded in 1956 when grants of about a quarter of a million were received. The staff at this time included 15 professional or technical employees. There were a dozen organized "specialized interest groups" and 16 standing committees. According to the annual reports of the AEA for 1955 and 1956 the proportion of the total income obtained from foundation sources ranged from a low of 57 per cent in 1951 to 80 and 79 per cent in 1952 and 1953 respectively, and 72 per cent in 1954. Since some projects for which grants had been received continued beyond that time, the proportion was still high, 62 per cent, in 1956.

Looking back on these lush years, some of the AEA's leaders confess to mixed feelings with respect to the size of the grants and the tempo with which the program was expanded. Chiefly, this was because of the fear that the association might come to be identified as the operational arm of the Fund for Adult Education, as one of its predecessors had become similarly identified in the minds of some with the Carnegie Corporation. As a matter of fact, while just such a statement is made by some informants, there is evidence that although officers of the Fund did at times suggest projects to the association, these were not always accepted. Nonetheless, a suggestion from a foundation with ample funds cannot help but carry weight with any organization. There are obvious dangers in questioning the desirability of a project for which financing is readily available, and in a rapidly expanding organization untroubled by financial stringency, it is easy for some projects to escape a degree of critical scrutiny that might have strengthened them. Commenting on this period one detached but lifelong friend of adult education said, "There was a . . . crime of oversubsidization of the AEA. There was too much money too easily gotten."

A Magazine Is Born. As illustrative of this period of the AEA's history two significant events have been selected among others, mainly on the basis of the amount of comment they received from the interviewees. The first of these was the founding of the magazine Adult Leadership. This was a project included in a list of suggested proposals submitted to the Fund for Adult Education. It did not have a very high priority among the leaders of the association as a whole, many of whom felt its purpose, audience and relationship to the association needed a clearer definition than the proposal had developed. A few, however, were especially interested in such a magazine as a medium of training for the countless number who were doing adult education but had not had the opportunity of any specific training for the work. The Fund for Adult Education adopted the suggestion for such a magazine as a major project. Its subsidy made the resultant publication, Adult Leadership, of central importance, surrounded it with an aura of unique significance, and gave it an existence as such, rather than as a part of the AEA.

To organize, plan, and publish the magazine an "Operations Committee" was selected representing: the Executive Committee of the AEA, social practitioners, educational theorists, social science researchists, human relations and leadership trainers, volunteer leaders, and publishing.

The first questions faced by the Operations Committee were: (1) name of magazine; (2) audience to which it would be directed; and (3) general pattern of contents. The answers to these three basic questions were consistent. The name selected, Adult Leadership, was intended to designate the function performed by the great number of people who are in positions of leadership in all sorts of adult groups under all sorts of auspices, for all sorts of purposes ranging from the teachers of formal classes in all sorts of subject matter, through the leaders of informal discussion groups of many kinds, to the chairmen of committees or other action groups. These were the people to whom the magazine was to be addressed. What was the common element to all of these very diverse situations? It obviously could not be subject matter, organizational relationships or purpose, but in all cases there were groups. All of these leaders dealt with groups, but few were knowledgeable about group behavior or skillful in stimulating interaction within groups. Some knowledge and understanding in this field recently had become available, and it was accepted as the purpose of the magazine to communicate this information and teach these skills in as practical and understandable and useful way as was possible.

It was recognized, however, that this principal purpose should be surrounded with other elements to give some breadth to the magazine and make it of interest to those who did not precisely fit the audience as defined. A general formula was agreed upon: about 50 per cent of each issue would be given over to some one aspect of groups--group behavior, group analysis, principles of interaction, problems of group solidarity, discussion leading, evaluation, etc., etc.; around 25 per cent, amounting to perhaps one substantial article per issue, would be given to a topic of general importance and/or interest in adult education; the other 25 per cent was to be made up of news of general interest, book reviews, information about useful materials, new uses for the various media and methods in some combination, not necessarily all parts in each issue. The formula, while a guide, was never intended to be followed with any rigidity. It was forgotten after the first few issues and the magazine tended to lack the breadth which the formula was intended to encourage and to stress more and more materials reflecting the point of view of what has come to be called Group Dynamics.

While there was a member of the AEA Executive Committee on the Operations Committee and some members of the AEA staff worked on Adult Leadership, there was no way that the Executive Committee could influence very significantly, let alone dominate, the policies or actions of the Operations Committee. Hindsight makes it clear that the minority view within the committee might better have prevailed. This view was that under the circumstances--the AEA a new organization attempting to unite the remnants of its predecessor organizations and attract additional thousands of members of all degrees of professionalization from all areas of adult education--the paramount need was for substantial resources to develop an organ of communication under the direct responsibility of the Executive Committee to deal in concrete terms with problems of organizational policy, membership, program, etc., which had to be worked out as the building of the AEA was carried forward. As it was, those responsible for the new magazine became primarily interested in their product -- a magazine which would be unique, highly communicative, and effective as a medium of training the leaders of adults--rather than in the organization which sponsored it.

Adult Leadership Appraised. One result of this situation and of the emphasis upon group dynamics was the development of conflicting attitudes about the magazine. Partly as a result of this the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan was asked to conduct a study of reader opinions, satisfactions and criticisms in 1953. In the current study one in five mentioned Adult Leadership when asked to name weaknesses in the AEA, if any, against one in nine who rated the magazine as an achievement. However, an additional one in four mentioned the "publication program" as an achievement, which presumably included Adult Leadership as well as Adult Education and the pamphlets and monographs. The number of people who stated that Adult Leadership had improved since necessary reduction in the budget forced the appointment of an unsalaried editor exceeded those who felt the magazine was not as good. The flavor of the critical thinking is given in the following:

> Adult Leadership until recently was conducted at freshman indoctrination level repeated ad nauseam in each issue.
>
> - - - - - - -
>
> Until recently Adult Leadership has been absolutely juvenile in tone. Editors and many contributors were quite ignorant that psychologists, sociologists and some individuals in other social sciences have done research with direct implications for adult education.
>
> - - - - - - -
>
> Adult Leadership was the right magazine for the times published by the wrong agency. It should have been the organ not of the AEA but of the National Training Laboratory for Group Dynamics.
>
> - - - - - - - -

> Adult Leadership has done more to popularize adult education in the minds of many than anything else. I've been surprised at the places I've seen copies.

- - - - - - -

> Adult Leadership is a fine thing.[5] It has shown there is more than one way of doing a thing.

Whether the magazine would have pleased its critics better if the original procedures had been followed is of course a hypothetical question. The facts show that after five issues planned by the Operations Committee, the committee picked a topic and selected a sub-committee which worked with a staff person to produce an issue. This proved a clumsy arrangement and in a few months most of the planning was done by the staff of the magazine.

Following the decline in the subsidy from the Fund for Adult Education, Adult Leadership became by 1958 more of the type of magazine the "hindsight judgement" noted above indicated it should have been. By that time, however, the situation within the AEA had changed.

The history of Adult Leadership is also related to the other episode of this period, one usually alluded to by interviewees who had been members of the AEA since its organization. The significance of this episode lies in its revelation of some of the difficulties to be met in promoting a generalized national agency in a field with as many facets as adult education.

A Membership Campaign Is Tried. Viewing the millions of adults participating in adult education and the tens of thousands who served them as instructors, discussion leaders and organizers and promoters of programs, it seemed reasonable to persons both in the Fund for Adult Education and the AEA, to expect that the latter should acquire and hold a membership of some tens of thousands of persons. One figure sometimes used was 50,000.[6] To this end a professional promotional organization was employed on a consultant basis to assist the AEA in a year's membership campaign. Over 700,000 letters inviting persons were mailed. Less than 1.1 per cent responded favorably, about one-fourth less than the number needed for the expenses of the campaign to be met. Of the fourteen lists of names used, two were built from suggestions by members and friends of AEA. These contained 8.2 per cent of the total number of names but significantly produced 27 per cent of the members added as a result of the campaign. Even so, the rate of return was only 3.54 per cent.

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[5] This is the typical favorable comment without elaboration.

A basic reason for this campaign is evident in what has already been stated. The Fund for Adult Education was interested in "non-professional persons engaged in adult education work." The magazine the Fund subsidized, Adult Leadership, was one of the benefits of membership. The problem was to find and enlist these volunteers.

The consultant agent advised that in efforts of this sort a 70 per cent renewal rate was "normal." A check of renewals for several months following the conclusion of the campaign showed rates of from 20 to 37 per cent. The membership, which was 4,892 in August, 1954, rose rapidly to 12,707 in May, 1955, reached a peak of 13,480 before the end of 1955, and then began a steady decline which at this writing has not yet ceased. Figure 1 presents the overall membership trends throughout the life of the AEA.[7]

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[6] In the first Annual Report of the Adult Education Association of the U. S. A. the goal was stated as to "develop an active membership of ten thousand individuals and organizations in 1952. Fifty thousand is the eventual goal." By May of 1953, however, the total was slightly over 4,000, but the goal was still listed as "the recruitment of a large corps of people--professional and volunteer--seriously concerned with adult education." By the Fifth Annual Report, when the promotional scheme was over and the decline in membership had begun, no mention of a target was made and instead the emphasis was on the "balanced representation of many occupational groupings" which was said to have been achieved.

There are numerous diagnoses of the failure of this campaign. In this case the authors present their own.

1. Few participants in adult education programs appear to think of the activity as adult education. They are concerned with the content as such or may even have become participants for reasons little concerned with education.[8] Comparably the vast majority of the instructors are part-time, usually holding other full-time positions. They are interested in teaching a subject. For the most part their problems in the area of adult education go no further than doing this teaching acceptably. They do not consider themselves as adult educators. This is even true of 12 per cent of the AEA members.[9] Neither group is cognizant of the social processes which make their association in an adult education activity possible nor of their own indebtedness to such processes.

The hypotheses may be advanced that the greater the degree of involvement in adult education, the greater the likelihood that a salaried person in the field will be an AEA member, and

The greater the proportion of free time a volunteer worker spends in adult education, the greater the likelihood such a person will be an AEA member. It follows that the reverse of these propositions is also true, and hence that a blanket invitation to tens of thousands of persons would not stimulate many persons to join the association.

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[7] A more detailed analysis of the recent downward trend in membership and an attempt to predict the extent of further declines are found in Appendix B.

[8] Brunner et al., op. cit.

[9] An additional 41 per cent of the members admitted that the title "adult educator" could be applied to them, though they seldom thought of themselves in this way.

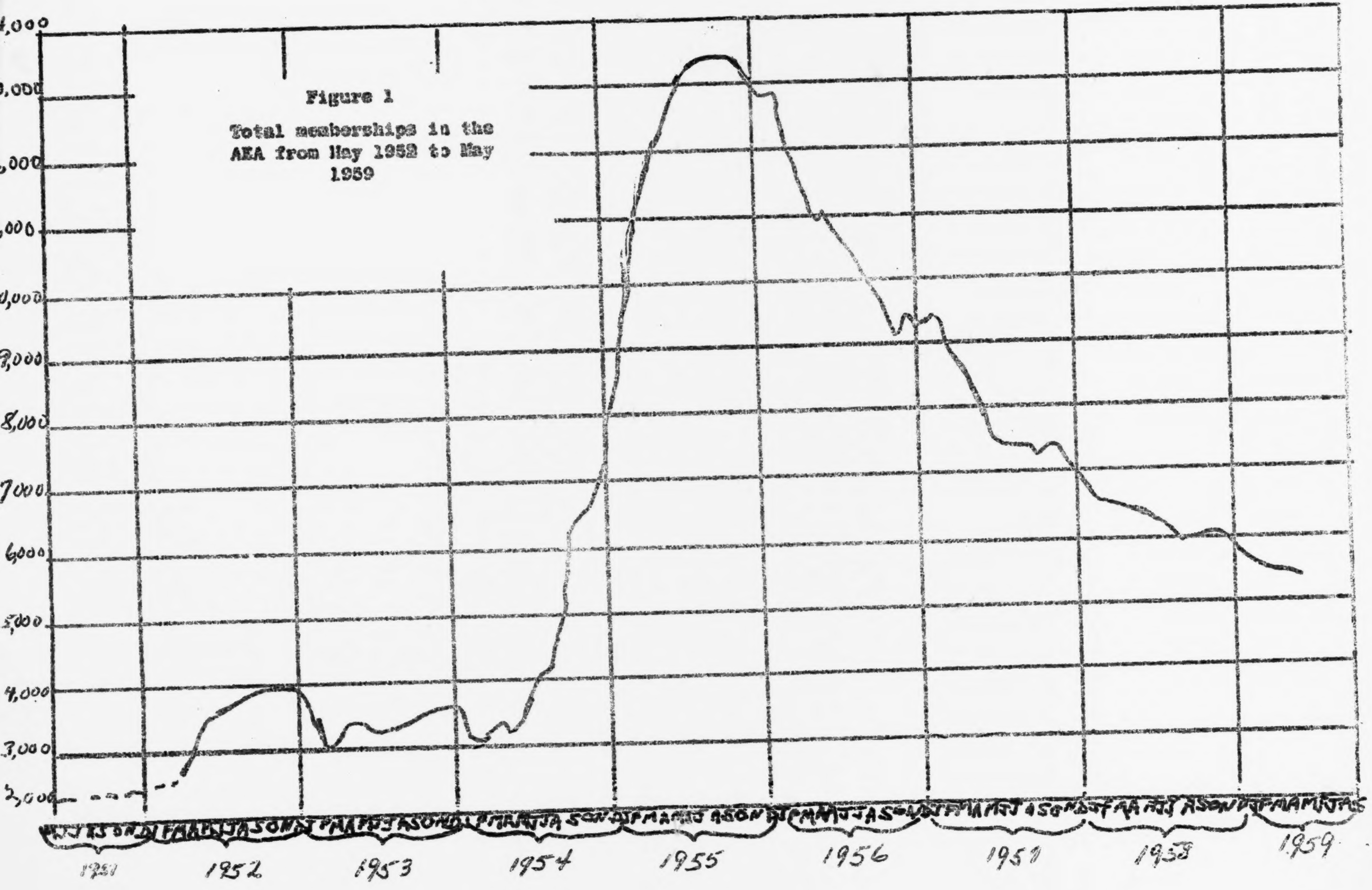

Figure 1

Total memberships in the AEA from May 1952 to May 1959

2. Apparently no thought was given to the fact that many volunteers in adult education agencies receive materials and operational suggestions from the national headquarters of their organizations. This is abundantly true of the League of Women Voters, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, all the national farm organizations, and others. The mere launching of a magazine like Adult Leadership with far less study of the possible constituency and its needs or of the market as it would be seen by advertisers than is normally undertaken before bringing out a new magazine or product, was an act of naive faith both on the part of the Fund for Adult Education and of the AEA. This, be it added, is not a criticism of Adult Leadership. In terms of the circulation achieved and the continued sale of reprints, it undoubtedly contributed to many people. The expectations for it were too high, and in terms of the whole campaign the position, motivations and needs of volunteers appear not to have been understood.

3. Whenever measured, the membership of the AEA has been disproportionately composed of professional persons. The magazines, publications and services of the AEA would have had to be reoriented to appeal to the new members enlisted by the campaign, about whom, in the nature of the case, little was known.[10] This may have not been accomplished.

4. Another important factor, seldom considered, is the high rate of turnover in the field. About 35 per cent of former members are no longer in adult education, although some of them may, of course, never have been. Comparably a large proportion of persons dropping their membership in the

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[10] There is a bare possibility that some change in the content of Adult Leadership may have been made and that it was not of interest to pre-campaign members or subscribers. The consultant agency, in its report to the AEA in June, 1955, notes in the half year prior to April 15, 1955, Adult Leadership had a loss of 9,744 subscribers which the campaign about balanced. There are, however, other possible explanations of this loss.

the National Association of Public School Adult Educators have done so because they have gone to other positions and are no longer concerned in adult education.[11]

Facts like these indicate that membership recruitment for the AEA must be on a non-stop basis to be effective, especially to reach those who assume the posts vacated by persons leaving the field.

5. More important, there is a very real question whether a national organization dealing with interests as diverse as those in adult education can be built up by any mail promotion campaign. The problems of such overall organizations are central to this study and will be considered in various contexts. Suffice it to say here that the small amount of evidence available to the authors indicates that such campaigns have not been successful.

This unsuccessful campaign raises some significant questions. The American Association for Adult Education enrolled and maintained as members, even after its loss of foundation funds, a "hard core" of persons who identified themselves as adult educators. The AEA seems to have and hold this clientele as well. In this campaign, and to a much lesser degree since, it found a means of enrolling some thousands of persons whom _it_ identified as engaged in adult education, but _who did not so consider themselves_. To retain such persons it was, is and will be essential to make them realize they have a place in adult education and an important part to play. The AEA tried to do this with its magazine and through an organization that provided a number of types of participation. It was unsuccessful in gaining the loyalty of these persons in sufficient numbers, perhaps in part because of the ideological conflicts discussed in Chapters VIII and XII. Does this failure mean that the AEA must be satisfied with a hard core membership who are completely identified with adult education, growing only as adult education itself grows? Should it, rather, seek slowly to enlarge the area of its influence, enlisting those on the perimeter as they come to feel sufficient involvement in adult education? These are questions which could well be kept in mind in reading most of the rest of this report.

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[11] Information supplied by Mr. Robert Luke in an interview.

The Fund for Adult Education Ceases Support. Whatever the causes of the failure to hold more of the nearly 10,000 members secured by the campaign, the results were disappointing both to the officers of the AEA and to the Fund for Adult Education. No foundation likes to be committed to continuing current expense grants and many will make no such grants. In conformity with this policy, the Fund for Adult Education notified the AEA that appropriations to its operating expenses would be discontinued.[12]

The reasons for this decision as seen by officers and senior staff of the AEA at the time it was made were diverse. They indicate a suspicion that the explanation given by the Fund for Adult Education was a rationalization of the decision. They also impute to the Fund criticisms of the AEA which were being voiced at the same time by some members. These criticisms involved the "unworkable" organizational structure with offices in four cities and insufficient contact within the staff, the character of the magazine Adult Leadership, the struggle within the AEA among certain groups to win control of the organization and its publications, the alleged tendency of the staff and Executive Committee to be too educational in their operations, too wedded to a "behavioral science approach" in contrast to a promotional drive, the diffusion of energies within the AEA, the lack of concrete, measurable results, and the AEA's slow progress toward self-support.

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[12] It is not accurate to say, as some do, that the Fund for Adult Education has withdrawn all support from the AEA. It is, for instance, supporting the Yearbook project and has made grants to assist in the publication of several monographs.

However, the reasons for the Fund for Adult Education's discontinuance of operational grants to the AEA, real or imagined, are important to this study only in so far as the reaction of the association's leadership to the decision illumines their conception of the role of a national agency like the AEA in the field. The loss of the operational grants as such is of great importance to this study. Drastic adjustments had to be made to the reduced income, affecting the service which the AEA could render to its members and therefore the entire program. It made more important than ever the task of determining which elements in the program would best serve adult education and be of most value to the membership.

Chapter IV

THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE AEA[1]

In this chapter we will attempt to learn who AEA's members are, what positions and interests they hold in adult education, how frequently they interact with others in the field, whether they see themselves as adult educators, and what other organizations they belong to in adult education. To answer these questions we will rely heavily on the questionnaire mailed to all members in October, 1958. The reader is again referred to Appendix A for detailed information about that questionnaire and its limitations. In addition, we will often find it useful to refer to some previous studies of AEA members, not only to provide supplementary data but in a few instances to trace changes which have occurred in AEA's membership over the years.

Current Demographic Characteristics of AEA Members

The questionnaire returns indicate that demographically AEA's members may be described as predominantly male, middle-aged, well educated, urban, and residing disproportionately in the northern, central, and western states. Let us examine each of these conclusions in more detail.

Sex. In the total sample 60 per cent are men, but some interesting variations can be found within the sample. Among those who claim to hold full-time paid positions concerned entirely with adult education 68 per cent are men. Men also make up 61 per cent of those who claim to hold other paid positions in adult education. However, among those members without paid positions in the field, only 47 per cent are male. Within this last group the majority report that they are doing volunteer or unpaid work in adult education, and among these volunteers women definitely predominate. Only 44 per cent of these volunteers are men. Thus roughly speaking, the AEA is made up of predominantly male "professionals" and female volunteers.

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[1] A preliminary version of this chapter appeared under the title, "The Composition of AEA's Membership," in Adult Education, vol. IX, no. 4 (Summer 1959). This chapter was written by William L. Nicholls II.

Age. The mean age of the sample is 46.4, and better than two-thirds of the members are between 35 and 54 years old. Perhaps more interesting, relatively few young people belong to the AEA, for only 4 per cent of the membership are under 30. Rather the membership appears to be skewed toward the older age group, 10 per cent being 60 or older. Perhaps surprisingly, there are no important differences between the age distributions of those who do and do not hold paid positions in adult education. If anything, it would appear that the volunteers are slightly older on the average than the paid workers.

Education. The educational level of AEA's members is almost astonishingly high. About one in five of the sample, some 18 per cent, claim to hold a doctorate degree. Another 54 per cent report completion of a master's degree or its equivalent. Thus a total of 72 per cent reported some form of graduate education beyond college, and many of those answering the questionnaire indicated that they were currently pursuing additional advanced degrees. Only 9 per cent indicated that they had not completed college and only 1 per cent reported no college training.

As one would expect, those holding paid positions in adult education have completed more formal education than those who do not. For example, while 77 per cent of the paid workers have at least a master's degree or its equivalent, 52 per cent of those without paid positions in adult education have such a degree. But although the "non-professionals" have relatively less education, it is important to realize that the majority of them also hold advanced degrees.

Size of Home Town. Slightly better than 75 per cent of the sample reside in cities of at least 25,000 in population and 40 per cent report that they live in a metropolis of a quarter of a million or more. Even those who have a residence in a smaller town frequently indicated that they live in a suburb. A total of 85 per cent claim to live in a town over 25,000 or a suburb. By contrast, the United States Census for 1950 reports that only 41.8 per cent of the population live in cities of 25,000 or more and only 23.1 per cent in metropolises of 250,000 or more.[2] Thus the AEA's membership is distinctly urban.

Region. Geographically AEA members can be found in every state in the Union, but an examination of the addresses of all AEA members in the United States as of October, 1958 shows that the southeastern and south central states were under-represented in the AEA. The United States Census estimated in 1957 that 27.3 per cent of the United States population resided in these southern states, but only 14.7 per cent of AEA's membership live in this area.[3] Each of the other major regions appeared to show a proportional over-representation in AEA membership as a result of this deficit of members in the south.

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[2] The data on the United States are taken from the Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1958, p. 21. The figures are based on the Census Bureau's "old" urban definition.

[3] The southern states included in this percentage are Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. The data for the United States are taken from the Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1958, p. 10.

Demographic Information from Previous Studies

Where comparable data are available from previous studies of AEA members very similar results have been obtained. An interview study conducted in September, 1953 by the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan (which we will abbreviate as the S. R. C. Study in further references) found 64 per cent of AEA's members at that time were male, a result which does not differ greatly from the 60 per cent reported above.[4] Even more similar is the 61 per cent male membership found by a questionnaire study carried out by the AEA in early 1956.[5] The S. R. C. Study found the mean age of AEA members in 1953 to be 45.8 years which is almost identical with the mean age of 46.4 found in 1958. Finally, the distribution of educational attainment of AEA members reported by the S. R. C. Study also differed from that reported above only in that the former study discovered slightly more members who had not entered college. Even this difference is more likely to have arisen from the fact that the highly educated are more likely to return questionnaires than from major shifts in AEA's composition.

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[4] The full report of this interview study is found in Stephen B. Withey, *et al.*, "*Adult Leadership*: A Study of Subscribers and Their Reactions to the Magazine" (Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, September, 1953). This study was based on personal interviews with 272 subscribers to *Adult Leadership* of whom 114 were AEA members. The sample was drawn from all subscribers living in counties in the United States which had a population of 90,000 or more.

[5] This earlier questionnaire study is reported in "Who We Are," *Adult Leadership*, September 1956, pp. 76-77, and in a mimeographed document entitled "Highlights of a Membership Characteristics Study." The study was based on questionnaires mailed to all AEA members at that time, 53 per cent of whom responded before the cut-off date. Biases in return rates similar to those found in the 1958 questionnaire survey were evident.

Income. Because of these similarities, there is reason to believe that information collected in the past about AEA's population but omitted from the current questionnaire may be useful today. Here the 1953 S. R. C. Study is of special interest because through its use of confidential interviews somewhat more personal data could be requested than through questionnaires. For example, the S. R. C. Survey reported that the median income of male AEA members at that time was $8,880 a year while the median income of employed female members was $5,828. About a third of the men and a fifth of the women members reported incomes over $10,000 a year.

Marital Status. This same study found that 86 per cent of the male AEA members were married, but this was the case for only 29 per cent of the women. This pattern of married men and unmarried women is, of course, typical of those employed in the professions.

Political Activity. The S. R. C. Study also found AEA members to be more politically active than most Americans. Some 82 per cent of the members reported voting in the two preceding local elections while this was true of only 51 per cent of the United States adult population in general. An additional 10 per cent of the members had voted in at least one of two preceding elections, and only 7 per cent had voted in neither. By contrast, over a third of the United States population had failed to vote in either election.

Participation in Voluntary Organizations. Another indication of the members' interest in their community and nation is the extent of their participation in voluntary organizations. The S. R. C. Study found that AEA members and Adult Leadership subscribers belonged on the average to approximately three voluntary organizations other than the AEA, and that 40 per cent of these members and subscribers were officers in at least one voluntary organization. This appears to be a very high level of voluntary activity.

Residential Mobility. Another piece of information found in the S. R. C. Study which will be shown at a later point to be important in understanding AEA's recent membership loss concerns the residential mobility of AEA's members and subscribers. Although studies have shown that about 70 per cent of the metropolitan population of the United States have resided in their present city for twenty or more years, this was true of only 40 per cent of the sample of AEA's members and subscribers.[6] Over a third of the sample had moved from another city in the ten years preceding the interviews and nearly a fifth had moved within the preceding five years. Thus it would seem that AEA's members are an extremely mobile group geographically.

The Adult Education Positions of AEA Members

Nearly four out of five persons in our sample, 78 per cent, claimed to hold a paid position in adult education. This proportion is almost identical to the 77 per cent who made the same claim in the 1956 questionnaire study. Thus although the membership is now less than half that at the time of this earlier survey, it would appear that the proportion of "professionals" in the association has remained constant. An even earlier questionnaire study conducted by the AEA in 1952 found a very similar 83 per cent of the members employed in adult education.[7] Thus even from this very early period it seems that at most only small changes have occurred in the percentage of members employed in the field.

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[6] Withey, et al., op. cit., pp. 10-11.

Among those holding paid positions, 33 per cent indicated that their position is a full-time one concerned entirely with adult education, 58 per cent reported that they hold a full-time position with some responsibilities in this field, and 8 per cent replied that they hold a part-time position. Thus although the typical AEA member does earn some of his livelihood in adult education, only a small proportion, some 26 per cent of the total membership, devote their time exclusively to this field.

Fourteen per cent of the members reported that they carry out unpaid or volunteer activities in adult education. However, 7 per cent of the members denied that they hold any position in adult education, either paid or volunteer. (Slightly less than 1 per cent did not answer the question concerning their present position.)

Tenure in the Field. Those who hold paid positions in adult education said that on the average they had done so for about ten years. Table 3 presents the complete distribution of tenure in the field for each of the three kinds of paid positions previously mentioned and reveals that those who hold full-time paid positions concerned entirely with adult education have been in the field the longest. Because of the previously

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[7] This earliest study, as in the 1956 and 1958 studies, involved the mailing of questionnaires to all members. Fifty per cent of the members replied. The only published reference to the 1952 survey appears to be in Annual Report 1954, The Adult Education Association of the U. S. A.

Table 3: Tenure in Paid Positions by the Type of Position Held in Adult Education

No. of years in a paid position	Present position in adult education			
	All of full-time paid	Part of full-time paid	Part-time paid	Total paid
16+	28%	22%	15%	23%
11 to 15	21	17	9	18
6 to 10	27	25	22	25
3 to 5	16	18	29	19
2 or less	7	6	17	7
No answer	1	12	8	8
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(520)	(910)	(133)	(1563)

noted age distribution of AEA members, it is understandable that here again we find relatively few newcomers to the field in the AEA.

Age of Entry to the Field. By subtracting the members' tenure in the field from their age, it is possible to derive another useful piece of information about the members, their age when they accepted their first position in adult education. In many cases this is found to be relatively late in their professional careers, for the median age of entrance into adult education of these members was 35.5. Only a little over a third of the members, some 34 per cent, were employed in any capacity in adult education by the age of thirty-one, an age when it would seem likely that most other professionals would be settled in their careers, and nearly a quarter of the members, 23 per cent, did not enter adult education until they were forty-two or older. This late age of recruitment which, like the pattern, mentioned in Chapter II, of coming into adult education from some other occupation rather than directly from college, probably is largely explained by the newness of the field. It in turn helps to make understandable the relative scarcity of young people within the AEA.

Responsibilities in the Field. Another approach used in the questionnaire to obtain a better understanding of what AEA's members do was the inclusion of a list of activities in which adult educators, or those with adult education functions, were thought commonly to engage. The members were requested to check no more than three, and it was hoped that they would check the three which occupied most of their time in the field. The gross results of this question are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4: Adult Education Activities Engaged In by AEA's Members

a)	Organizing adult education programs	47%
b)	Administering and directing the work of paid adult educators	32
c)	Training volunteer leaders	30
d)	Leading discussion groups	30
e)	Teaching courses to classes of adults	22
f)	Adult counseling and guidance	22
g)	Recruiting adults for adult education programs	17
h)	Preparing written, filmed or recorded material or displays for adult education	15
i)	Leading action groups	13
j)	Coordinating adult education and/or welfare agencies	12
k)	Training adult education workers for paid positions	12
l)	Justifying adult education programs to important decision makers (such as legislators) outside adult education	11
m)	Participating as an adult student	7
n)	Other	9
o)	No direct responsibilities in adult education although interested in it	5
p)	No answer	5
		289%*
	Base of %	(2000)

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*Percentages total more than 100% because many members checked two or more activities.

This table is useful in pointing up the emphasis on administration and organization in the activities of AEA's members, but as it stands it is also somewhat confusing. For example, while this table indicates that 7 per cent of the sample participated as adult students, it can not in itself make clear that less than 1 per cent were only students and did not have other activities in addition. Similarly, one may wonder what other combinations obscure information. In order to circumvent this difficulty an ad hoc method was used to classify each member into one of the following rough categories:

Top administrator:	Those administering and directing the work of paid adult educators
Other administrators:	Those not directing paid educators but engaged primarily in organizing and/or justifying adult education programs and carrying out other leadership activities such as coordinating, recruiting, training paid workers, and preparing materials for adult education
Broad gauge workers:	Those with some of the above administrative activities but also involved in such front line activities as teaching, leading action or discussion groups, counseling, training volunteers, and participating as students
Primarily workers:	Those with primarily or exclusively front line activities

As shown in Table 5, better than a third of those with some kind of position in adult education, either paid or volunteer, held top administrative positions, and almost half held primarily administrative posts. Only a third were concerned primarily or exclusively with the front line activities which involve contacts with adult students. As might be expected, there are sizable differences according to the type of position held.

Table 5: The Primary Activities Carried Out by AEA Members by the Type of Position Held in Adult Education*

	Present position in adult education				
Adult education activities	All of full-time paid	Part of full-time paid	Part-time paid	Volunteer or unpaid	Total
Top administrator	58%	31%	28%	6%	35%
Other administrator	15	15	7	6	13
Broad gauge workers	13	16	12	12	14
Primarily workers	11	33	50	65	33
Unclassifiable**	3	5	3	11	5
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(520)	(910)	(133)	(277)	(1840)

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*Those with no position in adult education and those who did not answer the question concerning their position in adult education are not included in this table.

**Some respondents could not be classified because they did not answer the question on their current activities or answered with unclassifiable responses.

Primary Agency. The organizations in which our sample perform their adult education functions were many and varied, and in some cases it appears that the same person has functions in several different kinds of organizations. In response to the question, "Within what type of agency or organization do you carry out your activities in adult education?" 14 per cent replied by checking more than one of the categories listed in Table 6. By reference to written-in comments, addresses, and responses to other questions, however, it was possible in most cases to determine within what agency an individual spent the majority of his time in adult education. For example, even though a dean of university extension may have limited voluntary adult educational activities in a church, youth-serving agency, or civic organization, it could easily be determined that his major time in adult education was spent at the university. As may be seen in Table 6, however, in some 6 per cent of the cases it was not possible to distinguish the members' primary organization.[8]

Although Table 6 contains thirteen different categories of organizations and agencies, an even greater diversification is uncovered when the "other agencies and organizations" are examined. Within this catch-all category are found the following additional organizations: philanthropic foundations, 0.8 per cent; home study, vocational, private and technical schools, 0.7 per cent; community, intergroup and human relations agencies, 0.6 per cent; consumer cooperatives and credit unions,

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[8] The volunteers whose primary organization was not ascertainable usually checked some combination of health and welfare, religious, civic and fraternal, or youth serving agency or one of these in combination with a university or public school. The paid workers without one obviously primary organization generally mentioned a university, public school, library, or agricultural extension agency in combination with either business and industry, or less frequently, a health and welfare, religious, civic or fraternal, or youth serving agency.

Table 6: Selected Primary Agencies and Type of Position in Adult Education

	Type of position				
Agency	All of full-time paid	Part of full-time paid	Part-time paid	Volunteer or unpaid	Total
Public school	20%	11%	39%	6%	15%
Health and welfare	6	16	3	12	12
Church or religious	5	14	5	12	11
Youth serving	4	14	3	8	9
University extension or evening division	19 }28	5 }15	14 }27	5 }13	9 }18
Other university division	9	10	13	8	9
Agricultural or home economics extension	13	5	1	-	6
Library	1	10	2	2	5
Business and industry	6	3	-	4	4
Civic and fraternal	1	1	1	14	3
Governmental	4	3	1	-	3
Labor unions	1	1	2	-	1
Professional associations	1	1	-	1	1
Other agencies or organizations	8	4	5	6	6
Not ascertainable or none	2	2	11	22	6
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(520)	(910)	(133)	(277)	(1840)

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*Those claiming to hold no position in adult education or not answering the question on their present position are not included in this table.

0.5 per cent; international and world affairs organizations, 0.3 per cent; museums, 0.3 per cent; and national discussion group programs, 0.2 per cent.

By comparing the percentages in the various columns one may note that, at least in this sample, the agency in which the members are employed is associated with the type of position held. Thus the full-time workers who are concerned exclusively with adult education in their jobs are found generally in the public schools, the universities, and agricultural extension. Those who have the education of adults as only part of a full-time paid position are disproportionately found in health and welfare agencies, church and religious organizations, youth serving agencies, and libraries. The part-time paid workers are highly concentrated in the public schools and universities, while the volunteers are disproportionately found in health and welfare agencies, church and religious organizations, civic and fraternal organizations, and youth serving agencies.

Trends in Agency Composition. Similar information about the members' agency affiliations was collected in the 1952 and 1956 questionnaire studies mentioned earlier. By comparing these with the current questionnaire results, it is therefore possible to obtain an idea of shifts in AEA's membership over the years. This is done in Table 7.

Unfortunately the same categories of agencies were not used in the coding of each of the earlier questionnaires, and therefore fewer and less precise categories are used in Table 7 than in Table 6. Nevertheless, it is still evident that substantial shifts took place in AEA's membership during its existence.

Table 7: Selected Primary Agencies as Determined by Mailed Questionnaires at Three Different Times

Agency	Questionnaire mailed 1952	Jan. 1956	Oct. 1958
College or university	25%	15%	19%
Public school	21	8	15
Library	10	3	5
Government (including Agricultural Extension)	11	10	9
Church or religious	3	16	11
Business or industry	5	6	4
Labor unions	1	1	1
Social, health, youth serving, welfare, civic, fraternal or other voluntary organizations	16	30	24
Other, unknown or none	8	11	12
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(1828)	(6945)	(1840)
Size of membership at time	(3163)	(12,935)	(5656)

In 1952 the majority of AEA members were affiliated with schools and libraries, as is shown in both Table 7 and Figure 1. By 1956, however, AEA's membership had increased 300 per cent, largely as a result of the promotion campaign discussed in the previous chapter, and its composition also had changed dramatically. At that time school and library adult educators comprised only a little over a fourth of the membership, and there had been a substantial increase in the proportion of members from church, religious, health, welfare, youth serving and various other voluntary agencies.[9]

From 1956 to 1958 there was greater than a 50 per cent loss in membership, and once more the composition shifted. The organizations which had experienced the greatest proportional increase prior to 1956 showed the greatest loss after that year, presumably as a result of the dropping away of the members which the promotional campaign had brought in.[10] Correspondingly, the school and library affiliated members showed a relative increase.

The changes from 1956 to 1958 were not as sharp as those from 1952 to 1956, and as a result the membership today is probably more heterogeneous than it was in 1952. This additional heterogeneity can undoubtedly be attributed at least in part to the membership campaign.

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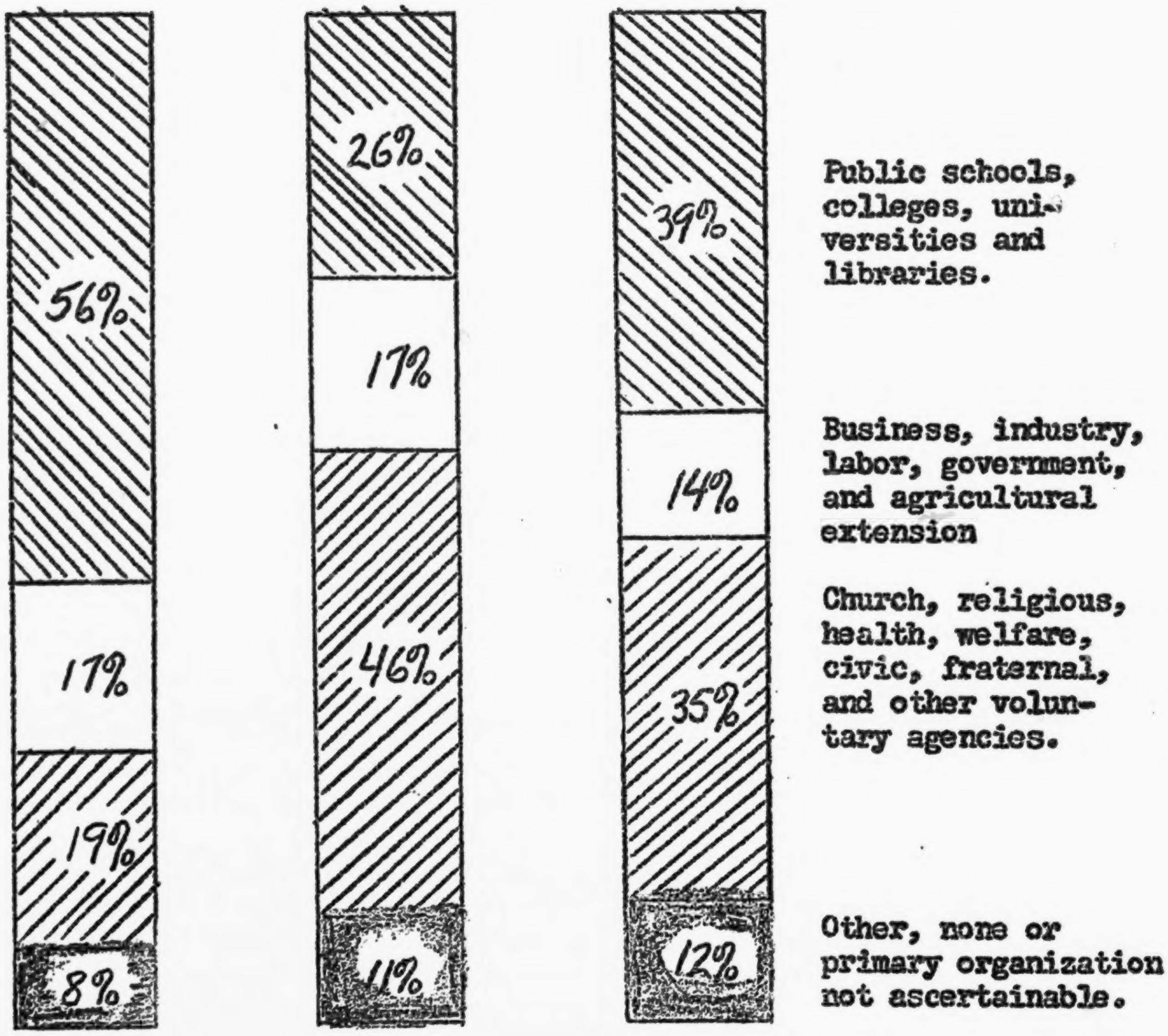
[9] It is important to realize that although the proportion of members in the schools and libraries decreased sharply from 1952 to 1956, the number of members from these institutions actually increased. For example, the number of librarians apparently rose from about 300 in 1952 to slightly less than 400 by 1956. The decreasing percentages of the school and library people between these years indicate that the great bulk of the new members added on by the promotion campaign came from other agencies.

[10] More detailed information about the changes in proportions from the various agencies from 1956 to 1958 will be found in Nicholls and Brunner, op. cit.

Figure 2: The Composition of AEA's Membership as Determined by Mailed Questionnaires at Three Different Times



Base of %	1828	6945	1840
Total members at time	3163	12,935	5656

It would be useful to know if in the future the AEA's agency composition will return to that found in 1952. The evidence on which such a projection could be made, however, is unfortunately contradictory. Examination of the agency affiliations of a sample of individuals who had not renewed their membership in 1958 but who were still in adult education showed that even as late as last year the drop-outs were disproportionately persons from health, religious and other voluntary agencies. The results of a smaller sample of people who dropped out in April of 1959, however, in which less confidence can be placed because of the small numbers involved, indicates a contrary trend with these voluntary organizations accounting for a relatively small proportion of those leaving the organization. The best guess of the authors, which admittedly is not based on very solid information, is that the agency composition of the membership probably has stabilized. The total number of members may continue to decline for a year or so, but the relative proportion of persons from the various agencies in it may remain constant. Of course another promotion campaign or various membership drives directed toward particular agencies would change this forecast.

The Adult Education Interests of AEA Members

The wide range of agencies and institutions within which the members perform their adult education roles provides perhaps the major basis of the often repeated view that the members are an extremely heterogeneous group. However, a second dimension, which appears to add to their heterogeneity, and which frequently cuts across the first, is their diversity of interests within the field. The mere number of interest areas listed in Table 8 gives evidence to this

Table 8: The Major Personal Areas of Interest in the Field of Adult Education of AEA Members as Determined by Two Mailed Questionnaires

Area of interest	Jan. 1956 survey	Oct. 1958 survey
a) Providing broad, comprehensive adult education	*	33%
b) Human relations training	33	32
c) Community development	32	27
d) Group work	29	21
e) Parent and family education	22	20
f) Education for leisure	11	16
g) Inter-group relations	14	16
h) Public and international affairs	14	15
i) Religious education	27	15
j) Professional education	17	14
k) Vocational education	10	13
l) Liberal arts education	12	13
m) Executive, supervisory or sales training	17	11
n) Health education	16	11
o) Education for aging	8	11
p) Public relations	16	9
q) Rural or agricultural education	8	7
r) Economic education	4	5
s) Education of the foreign born	3	4
t) Trade union and workers' education	5	4
u) Fundamental and literacy education	5	4
v) Other	*	6
w) No answer	*	2
	309%**	30[illegible]%**
Base of %	(6945)	(2000)

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*Not asked or not reported in the 1956 survey.

**Percentages total more than 100% because members noted several interests each.

heterogeneity, and the fact that no more than a third of the members selected any single interest, even when the respondents were asked to check their *three* major personal areas of interest, further emphasizes this diversity.

Recent Trends. Here again some comparative data are available from the 1956 questionnaire, but in this case the percentages from the two surveys are not strictly comparable because the later one contained some check list items which the former did not. Consequently little importance should be attached to *small* differences between percentages from the two surveys. Nevertheless, a comparison of the two sets of figures does indicate two important conclusions about trends in AEA's membership. First, it appears that there has been a sizable decline over the two years in the proportion of members who are interested in religious education. Secondly, apart from this one instance there does not appear to have been much change in the interests of the members, although some small changes may have escaped notice because the data are not strictly comparable.

Broad vs. Specialized Interests. Although an interest in "providing broad, comprehensive adult education" heads the list in the 1958 survey, it is striking that only a third of the sample elected to express this more general concern as one of their major areas of interest in the field. This suggests that AEA members are predominantly specialists of one sort or another, although the range of interests selected by many of the members indicates frequently diverse sets of specialties.

Variations Among the Members. Because so many different interests are found in Table 8, some summarizing is necessary to obtain an understanding of variations of interests within the sample. Once again this has been done in an *ad hoc* way. Because of its special importance an interest in broad and comprehensive adult education has been kept separate. The following groupings, however, are used in the remaining tables of this report where interests are discussed[10]:

> Social and interpersonal education and methods: Human relations training; community development; group work; and intergroup relations.
>
> Liberal education: Liberal arts education; public and international affairs; and economic education.
>
> Work related education: Professional education; vocational education; executive, supervisory or sales education; public relations; and trade union or workers' education.
>
> Remedial education: Education of the foreign born, and fundamental and literacy education.
>
> Education for special roles and interests: Parent and family education; education for leisure; health education; education for aging; and religious education.

As may be seen in the last column of Table 9, when these groupings are used the most popular of the six areas appears to be that of the social and interpersonal education and methods. Less than half as many expressed an interest in liberal education. It is also worthy of note, in view of the historical development of adult education in this country, that the long established area of remedial education attracted the interests of only 7 per cent of AEA's members.

The interests of the members differ somewhat according to the type of position held in the field. The providing of broad and comprehensive adult education was mentioned as an interest by almost half of

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[10] Because it covers such a broad range of content areas, "rural or agricultural education" has not been placed in any of these groupings.

Table 9: The Summarized Areas of Interest in the Field of Adult Education by the Type of Position Held in Adult Education*

	Type of position					
Summarized areas of interest**	All of full-time paid	Part of full-time paid	Part-time paid	Volunteer or unpaid	No position	Total
Broad, comprehensive	48%	31%	35%	17%	24%	33%
Social and interpersonal	47	68	54	71	64	62
Liberal	35	23	28	26	27	27
Work related	48	37	47	26	36	39
Remedial	10	5	12	3	8	7
Special roles and interests	35	55	74	59	54	50
	223%***	219%	250%	202%	213%	218%
Base of %	(520)	(910)	(133)	(277)	(143)	(1982)

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*Members not indicating their present position in adult education are excluded from this table.

**A description of these categories is provided on page 85.

***These columns total more than 100% because members frequently expressed interests in more than one area.

those with full-time paid positions concerned entirely with adult education, but by less than a fifth of the volunteers. These full-time paid workers were also disproportionately interested in work related education and liberal education, but although almost half of them expressed an interest in social and interpersonal education and methods, this was a lower proportion than among those with any other kind of position in adult education. It is the volunteers who appear to be most frequently concerned with the social and interpersonal.

Greater variations in interests are found with regard to the primary organizations in which the members carry out their adult education functions, as is shown in Table 10. This table has been arranged to emphasize the differences in the proportions indicating an interest in providing broad and comprehensive adult education. The agencies whose members frequently hold this interest are found on the left and those whose members seldom have the interest are found on the right. This ordering also serves to distinguish the agencies by the frequency of their members' interest in social and interpersonal education and methods, since those agencies which have a large proportion interested in this area tend to have a small proportion interested in broad and comprehensive education. Table 10 also points out the concentration of those interested in liberal education in university extension and the libraries. With only one exception, the proportion with this interest is twice as great in the libraries and university extension as in any of the other agencies.

Table 10: The Summarized Areas of Interest in the Field of Adult Education by Selected Primary Agencies*

Summarized areas of interest	Public schools	Libraries	Un. Ext.	Other college & un.	Agri. ext.	Bus. and industry	Youth serving	Civic and fraternal	Church & religious	Health & welfare
Broad, comprehensive	64%	57%	55%	36%	32%	25%	21%	21%	15%	11%
Social and interpersonal	36	57	44	54	65	58	92	88	70	80
Liberal	23	53	53	29	18	26	18	38	14	7
Work related	46	24	58	56	27	87	25	29	12	36
Remedial	24	4	3	6	2	—	3	5	2	1
Special roles and interests	42	52	23	47	41	14	49	45	56	91
	235%**	247%	236%	228%	185%	210%	208%	226%	169%	226%
Base of %	(269)	(104)	(175)	(174)	(113)	(69)	(173)	(58)	(199)	(224)

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*Information is not presented in this table for members whose primary agency affiliation was unascertainable, who had no primary agency, or whose primary agency was of a type which comprised less than 2.5% of AEA's members. Members not answering the question about personal areas of interest are also excluded.

**These columns total more than 100% because members frequently expressed interests in more than one area.

Self-Perception as an Adult Educator

Perhaps one of the most crucial factors in the growth of a new field or profession lies in the development among its practitioners of a feeling of identification with the field and of a growing self-perception on their part that they are members of it. At the current time adult education appears to have reached a stage where some of its practitioners have already achieved such an identification and self-perception. Thus one interviewee reported:

> I have no doubts at all that I am an adult educator. When I go to borrow money at the bank or have to give my occupation, I always give it as adult educator.

For others self-identification as an adult educator is not taken so easily, especially when dealing with people outside the field, as evidenced by the following remarks:

> When I'm on a train and some one asks me what I do, I first say I'm an educator. This usually avoids trouble. If they persist I next say I'm an adult educator. I don't use "adult educator" first because it means so little to so many people.

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> While the concept covers what we are trying to do, many of my academic colleagues don't respect the word. There is a tendency here /at my college/ therefore not to define one's role as adult educator. The term creates problems for getting the job done which I'm trying to do.

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> I think it does apply. To a layman I say I'm Director of /a large welfare agency/ rather than say I'm an adult educator, because if I said "adult educator" he would think I'm a teacher.

- - - - -

> Yes, it applies. A good bit of my work is as some kind of adult educator, . . . /but/ if some one pressed me about my occupation on the street, I would say I was in human relations work.

Finally, some members of the AEA would deny that they could or should be identified as adult educators. Thus a director of a large university extension program and former Executive Committee member states:

> It doesn't apply. I'm a university administrator with special programs for adults. We don't think of ourselves as an adult education agency but rather as people looking to see what the university can do to meet the needs of people of the state, people of all ages.

In order to collect more systematic information about self-perception, the following item was included in the questionnaires:

> How well do you think the title of "adult educator" applies to you?
>
> a) It is a very appropriate title and I often think of myself as an adult educator.
>
> b) It is a title which could be appropriately applied to me, but I seldom think of myself in this way.
>
> c) It is not an appropriate title for me.

As found in the last column of Table 11, the majority of the members felt that the title of "adult educator" could be applied to them, but less than half tended to think of themselves in this way. Even among the paid workers in adult education, only those with full-time responsibilities concerned entirely with adult education appeared in general to have a close enough personal identification with adult education to think of themselves as adult educators. Here it seems likely that the marginal position of adult education in most institutions, with its implication that the adult education functions are part of another job, hinders the development of a self-image as an adult educator. Thus the man who is assistant superintendent both of an adult education program and of the vocational high school program in the public schools, or the union executive who is in charge both of recruiting new union members

Table 11: Self-Perception as an "Adult Educator" by the Type of Position Held in Adult Education*

Appropriateness of title of "adult educator"	Type of position All of full-time paid	Part of full-time paid	Part-time paid	Volunteer or unpaid	No position	Total
Thinks of self	77%	40%	49%	22%	24%	46%
Could be applied	21	52	41	50	39	42
Not appropriate	2	8	10	28	47	12
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(517)	(897)	(133)	(269)	(137)	(1951)

Table 12: Self-Perception as an "Adult Educator" Among Those Who Did and Did Not List "Providing Broad, Comprehensive Adult Education" Among Their Major Personal Areas of Interest**

Appropriateness of title of "adult educator"	Interested in providing broad, comprehensive adult education Yes	No
Thinks of self	59%	40%
Could be applied	32	47
Not appropriate	9	13
	100%	100%
Base of %	(646)	(1289)

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*Those who did not answer either the self-perception question or the question about their present position are excluded from this table.

**Those who did not answer either the self-perception question or the question about their major personal areas of interest are excluded from this table.

as well as educating them, undoubtedly has a more difficult time identifying with adult education than those whose only responsibilities lie within the field.

Thinking of oneself as an adult educator is also related to having an interest in providing broad and comprehensive adult education, as is shown in Table 12. Undoubtedly these two variables are interrelated. Not only would a concern with the broader picture of adult education, rather than merely an interest in using it for some specialized purpose, tend to heighten one's self-image as an adult educator, but having such a self-image would conversely lead some people to take a broader interest in the field.

Inter-Agency Contacts

Because adult education is carried on in so many different agencies and organizations, the growth of adult education as a self-conscious field or discipline may well depend upon the extent of interpersonal contacts between adult educators in different agencies. Such contacts are of value not only in the sharing of techniques and in building cooperation, but sociological theory suggests that they should help to heighten identification with the field. Prerequisite to the formation of all self-conscious groups, including professions, is the simple opportunity to interact, and if that interaction is frequent and intense enough, and if it is accompanied by a growing awareness of common problems and joint solutions to them, the process of identification with that group is likely to follow. Thus in adult education, it is likely to be through the face-to-face meetings of the practitioners that each comes to see that it is precisely those problems and concerns that make him unusual and perhaps marginal in his own agency which are the interests he shares with other adult educators, and from this process a new self-perception may grow. For this reason, interagency contacts may be expected to play an especially important role in building a self-image as an adult educator and in developing broader interests in adult education.

The Extent of Interagency Contacts. In order to investigate this area the following question was asked: "How often during the past month have you discussed common problems with adult educators outside your own agency or organization?" The mean number of reported discussions was slightly less than five during the month, but some 20 per cent indicated no discussions of common problems at all during the preceding month, and the majority of those in the sample reported that they had such discussions less than once a week.

As shown in Table 13, such interagency contacts were much more common among members with full-time positions concerned exclusively with adult education than among other paid workers, and in general more discussions were reported among the paid workers than among the volunteers or those with no position in adult education. In part these differences may result from a relationship between interagency contacts and a deep interest in adult education, but they also undoubtedly reflect the fact that the full-time workers were more frequently administrators whose duties both permit and require more contacts outside their agencies than are possible for other workers.[11]

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[11] Table 1 in Appendix C shows that interagency contacts were more common for top administrators than for those holding other positions in adult education.

Table 13: The Frequency of Discussions of Common Problems in Adult Education With Those Outside the Respondent's Own Agency by Type of Position Held in Adult Education*

Frequency of discussions	Type of position All of full-time paid	Part of full-time paid	Part-time paid	Volunteer or unpaid	No position	Total
More than one/week	36%	22%	16%	10%	5%	22%
About one/week	22	17	12	14	3	17
One to three times/month	32	43	44	38	22	38
Not at all	9	17	27	32	50	20
No answer	1	1	1	6	21	3
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(520)	(910)	(133)	(277)	(143)	(1983)

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*Those who did not answer the question concerning their present position are excluded from this table.

Interagency Contacts and Self-Image. Table 14 provides some direct empirical support for the contention that interagency contacts help to increase the practitioner's definition of himself as an adult educator. This table shows that even when the type of position in adult education is held constant, the percentage of members who think of themselves as adult educators increases with the extent of their interagency contacts. Furthermore, because the range of percentages in this table is so great, it suggests that together the type of position held and interagency contact comprise two extremely important determinants of self-image.[12]

Interagency Contacts and the Breadth of Interest. A similar but somewhat less dramatic result is found in Table 15. Here it is found that even when the type of position in adult education is controlled, the per cent expressing an interest in providing broad and comprehensive adult education increases significantly with the frequency of interagency contacts. Thus it appears that interagency contacts not only help to advance an identification with adult education through the development of a special self-image, but that these same contacts may help to broaden the interests of the practitioners toward a more generalized interest in the field.

Implications for the AEA. The authors believe that these results are not of purely academic interest, but have practical implications for the AEA. As a voluntary membership association the AEA faces the

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[12] Here again, however, the possibility exists that the relationship between interagency contacts and self-perception may be one of interdependence. Persons who define themselves as adult educators may be more likely to seek out interagency contacts.

Table 14: The Per Cent of Members Who Think of Themselves as Adult Educators According to the Type of Position Held in Adult Education and the Frequency of Interagency Discussions*

	Type of position		
Frequency of discussions	All of full-time paid	Part of full-time or part-time paid	Volunteer or unpaid
1 per week or more	82% (294)**	48% (378)	32% (66)
1 to 3 per month	71% (168)	42% (146)	20% (100)
None	66% (50)	26% (393)	18% (88)

How to read this table: Each percentage indicates the per cent of individuals at the labeled combination of type of position and frequency of interagency contacts who said they thought of themselves as adult educators. Thus the upper left percentage reports that among members with full-time positions concerned exclusively with adult education who had one or more interagency contacts per week, 82% thought of themselves as adult educators.

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*Those not answering any of the three questions involved in this table and those with no position in adult education are excluded.

**Numbers in parentheses indicate the bases on which the percentages were computed.

Table 15: The Per Cent of Members Who Listed "Providing Broad, Comprehensive Adult Education" as One of Their Major Personal Areas of Interest According to the Type of Position Held in Adult Education and the Frequency of Interagency Discussions*

Frequency of discussions	Type of position All of full-time paid		Part of full-time or part-time paid		Volunteer or unpaid	
1 per week or more	56%	(294)**	41%	(382)	28%	(68)
1 to 3 per month	40%	(166)	29%	(454)	14%	(104)
None	35%	(49)	19%	(196)	9%	(87)

How to read this table: Each percentage indicates the per cent of individuals at the labeled combination of type of position and frequency of interagency contacts who listed "providing broad, comprehensive adult education" as one of their major personal areas of interest. Thus the upper left percentage reports that among members with full-time positions concerned exclusively with adult education who had one or more interagency contacts per week, 56% listed providing broad and comprehensive adult education as a major interest.

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*Those not answering any of the three questions involved in this table and those with no position in adult education are excluded.

**The number in parentheses indicates the bases on which the percentages were computed.

problem of attracting a sufficient body of members upon whose interest and loyalty it can depend both for moral and financial support. Yet it draws its members from widely varying agencies and from among people with vastly differing interests within the field. Within this great diversity it is necessary to find some points of common identification and interest, and on the most obvious level these would seem to be a concern with adult education in general and a feeling of identification with the field. Other agencies and organizations may supply specific help on technical matters and perform clearing house functions, but the AEA is in the best position to ask for loyalty and support not only for services it supplies, but also because it represents these broader interests and provides an organization home for those who see themselves as part of a new discipline, profession, or movement. Consequently, it is important for its leaders to know what it is that helps to develop these broader interests and self-perceptions.

Of the two factors found related to holding a self-image as an adult educator and having broader interests in the field, the type of position held in the field appears to be more potent, but it is probably less important to the AEA from a practical point of view. The AEA probably can do little, at least directly, to increase the number of full-time paid positions in the field. However, it probably can have an effect on increasing interagency contacts, especially those which could occur through local adult education councils and associations. ✓

Membership in Other Adult Education Organizations

In order to determine what other voluntary adult education organizations AEA's members participated in, they were asked to indicate whether they belonged to: (a) a local or city council of adult education; (b) a state or regional council of adult education; or (c) a national organization other than the AEA which was concerned with adult education. An examination of the replies to this question revealed that the members differed somewhat in their understanding of what kinds of organizations were being asked for, so that the percentages in Table 16 should be viewed with caution. It may be seen, however, that about a fifth of the members reported membership in a local or city council, approximately a third in a state or regional council, and slightly less than half in another national organization. This table also shows that paid adult educators, especially those concerned entirely with adult education, were more likely to report memberships in such organizations than volunteers or those with no position.

Local Affiliations and Interagency Contacts. A total of 40 per cent of the sample indicated that they belong to an adult education association or council either at the local, or the state or regional level, and as one would expect, those who did have such memberships reported more interagency discussions than members who have no such local affiliations. This relationship holds even when the type of position in adult education is controlled, as is shown in Table 17.

Membership in Other Organizations. AEA members who stated that they were members of other national organizations concerned with adult education were asked to designate in which organizations they held memberships. The organizations named ranged from the National Association of Public School Adult Educators to the Methodist Church and the Dale

Table 16: Membership in Adult Education Voluntary Organizations (Other Than the AEA) by the Type of Position Held in Adult Education*

	Type of position					
Type of organization	All of full-time paid	Part of full-time paid	Part-time paid	Volunteer or unpaid	No position	Total
Local or city	33%	17%	29%	13%	4%	21%
State or regional	49	27	41	20	8	31
National	60	47	40	35	17	46
None	20	34	24	46	69	34
No answer	1	3	3	3	7	3
	163%**	128%	137%	117%	105%	135%
Base of %	(520)	(910)	(133)	(277)	(143)	(1983)

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*Members not indicating their present position in adult education are excluded from this table.

**These columns total more than 100% because members frequently reported belonging to more than one type of organization.

Table 17: The Frequency of Discussions of Common Problems in Adult Education With Those Outside the Respondent's Own Agency According to the Type of Position Held in Adult Education and Whether or Not the Respondent Belonged to a Local or State Adult Education Council or Association*

	Type of position									
	All of full-time paid		Part of full-time paid		Part-time paid		Volunteer or unpaid		No present position	
Frequency of discussions	Belong	Not	Belong	Not	Belong	Not	Belong	Not	Belong	Not
1 or more/week	64%	48%	49%	32%	33%	23%	42%	20%	20%	10%
1 to 3/month	31	35	42	45	49	43	39	40	30	28
None	5	17	9	23	18	34	19	40	50	62
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(308)	(201)	(320)	(557)	(72)	(56)	(76)	(178)	(10)	(96)

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*Those who did not answer the question concerning their present position in adult education, those who did not indicate the other organizations they belonged to, and those not reporting the frequency of their interagency discussions are not included in this table.

Carnegie Alumni Association, and many members reported memberships in organizations which do not have individual memberships, such as the National University Extension Association. Because there was no way to check on most of the memberships claimed, all organizations mentioned have been counted. Therefore, the results must be viewed as national organizations which those returning the questionnaire felt were concerned with adult education and to which they believed they belonged. Tabular presentation of these results is complex and has been placed in Appendix C, Table 2. However, the following points may be found of interest:

1. A total of 19 per cent of the sample (or 40 per cent of those reporting membership in some national organization concerned with adult education) indicated membership in at least one of the following professional societies: National Association of Public School Adult Educators; American Library Association; American Society of Training Directors; American Vocational Association; National University Extension Association; Association of University Evening Colleges; National Association of County Agricultural Agencies; or the National Home Demonstration Agents' Association.

2. An additional 13 per cent of the sample (or 27 per cent of those with another national organization membership) indicated that they did not belong to any of the above associations but did belong to an adult education organization affiliated with the Council of National Organizations of the AEA or to the American Association of Land Grant Colleges or the National Education Association.

3. An additional 9 per cent of the sample (or 21 per cent of those claiming membership in some other adult education organization) indicated that they did not belong to any of the above but did belong

to some other organization concerned with adult education. Most of these organizations would be considered highly peripheral to the field by many adult educators.

From the foregoing it would seem that a relatively small proportion of AEA's members, approximately a third, saw themselves as members of another national organization which is clearly central to the field. Undoubtedly many other members would have reported memberships in the more peripheral voluntary organizations which have only limited adult education activities, if these had been specifically asked for. However, it does not appear to be the case, as many leaders and critics of the AEA assume, that nearly all its members belong to other national adult education organizations.

The Relative Value of AEA Membership. In the current questionnaire those who reported membership in other national organizations in adult education were asked: "In general have you found membership in the AEA more or less valuable to you than membership in these other organizations?" Among those who answered this question 12 per cent said they found the AEA more valuable, 32 per cent found it equally valuable, and 56 per cent less valuable.[13]

In response to a free-answer question as to why the AEA was less valuable, the major reason offered was that in comparison with more specialized organizations, the AEA was less relevant to the individual's particular activities in the field. Other reasons less commonly offered were that the AEA gave less practical assistance and that the AEA was too broad and heterogeneous. Each of these answers seems to reflect the same problem. The AEA is composed of many different kinds of adult educators and consequently cannot give specific help to each of them.

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[13] Some 8 per cent of the respondents who reported membership in another national organization did not answer the question as to its relative value.

This same heterogeneity and comprehensiveness, however, was offered as an argument by about a quarter of those who felt the AEA was more valuable, for they believed this breadth provided them more scope and a greater opportunity for the exchange of ideas. It also offered an opportunity to meet at least some people with their particular specialized interests, no matter how specialized that interest was. Other explanations as to why the AEA was found more valuable were that the AEA was more relevant to the members' interests because it dealt specifically with adult education and that AEA's publications were especially useful.[14] Members who said the AEA was equally valuable tended to give combinations of the views expressed by those saying it was "more" or "less" valuable.

Summary

The foregoing analysis suggests that AEA members are typically middle-aged men and women from all parts of the United States who hold advanced degrees, generally reside in urban areas, are politically active (at least to the extent of voting), geographically mobile, and frequently involved in several voluntary organizations outside of adult education. In these respects they appear similar to other American urban professional groups. Furthermore, at least with regard to age, sex and education, the composition of the membership appears to have remained essentially constant throughout its existence.

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[14] The complete distribution of replies as to why the AEA was seen as more or less valuable may be found in Appendix C, Table 3.

Within the AEA there apparently exists a core, consisting of about a quarter to a third of the membership, who are deeply committed to adult education occupationally and psychologically. These people generally hold full-time positions in the field, usually of an administrative nature, think of themselves as adult educators, and hold broad interests in the field. They are also likely to belong to other adult education voluntary organizations at the local, state and national level, and they have relatively frequent contacts outside their own agencies. They are most commonly found in the public schools, universities, libraries, and agricultural extension. In its early years, it seems possible that such individuals made up a larger proportion of the membership.

For the majority of the members, however, adult education appears to be a partial or secondary interest. Their paid positions may include some adult education functions, or they may be involved in voluntary activities which they consider adult education. They perform these adult education functions within a wide variety of agencies and organizations. Their interests tend to be in the specialized areas of the field or in the social and interpersonal methods, and they do not generally view themselves as adult educators or hold an interest in adult education in general. Their contacts with people in other agencies than their own tend to be relatively infrequent and they seldom belong to other national organizations in the field or to local and state adult education councils. It would seem likely that many of these members were recruited during the membership promotion campaign, and since that time many of them have left the organization.

This distinction between the involved core group and the remaining less involved majority will be frequently utilized in the following chapters, for it will be shown that these two groups differ in the contacts which they have with the AEA, and in the information, attitudes and evaluations they hold about it.

Chapter V

MEMBERS' RELATIONSHIPS TO THE AEA*

Part 1

Having examined the characteristics of the members of the AEA, we will turn our attention in the present chapter to the contacts they have with the AEA and their general attitudes towards the organization.

The members possess two major contacts with the AEA, namely, the periodicals and the conferences. Since not every member subscribes to both of AEA's periodicals and not every member has attended a convention, our first task will be to learn which members in fact have these contacts. This investigation will entail a certain amount of repetition of the preceding chapter, as several characteristics of the respondents are found to cluster together into distinguishable types which have already been identified. We will next consider the members' knowledge of certain organizational operations, namely, the system of election and of financing. Finally, we will cover the question of the members' overall interest in and satisfaction with the organization.

A. The Members' Contacts With the Organization

1. Characteristics of Magazine Recipients

Perhaps the most important contact that many of the members have with their organization is with its periodicals. All members receive at least one of the AEA's magazines while only a small minority attend the annual conferences. Moreover, whether the members receive both Adult Education and Adult Leadership or only the latter is an important distinction to make because of the intended differences with respect to audience and contents between these two magazines. As pointed out in

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* This chapter was written by Sam Sieber.

Chapter III, Adult Leadership was originally designed to reach the heterogeneous group of non-professional leaders of face-to-face adult groups. Adult Education, on the other hand, was devoted to articles and research reports of primary concern to professional adult educators and in addition served as the AEA's house organ. While this latter function has since been shifted to Adult Leadership, the magazines still maintain a somewhat different emphasis with respect to professional and non-professional interests. However, at present those members who wish to receive Adult Education must also receive Adult Leadership. These members are officially designated as either Professional or Contributing members, the latter making an additional financial contribution to the AEA. Those who receive only Adult Leadership, on the other hand, are officially called General members.

In order to speak to the needs and interests of the readers of the AEA's two magazines, it should be helpful to have information concerning the characteristics of the respective magazine recipients at the time of our survey. It is hoped that the information contained herein will be of some use in guiding the selection of material for inclusion in the respective publications.

In the following discussion the magazine recipients have been classified according to whether they claimed to receive both magazines or only one, i.e., Adult Leadership. This division does not correspond to the different types of membership in the AEA, however, since a surprisingly large proportion of General members (18 per cent) claimed to "receive" both magazines. Although General members do not receive both magazines through individual mailings, it is possible that they have access to them through institutional memberships or through friends or colleagues who are Professional or Contributing members. Detailed analysis of these respondents has shown that they are sufficiently similar to Professional and Contributing members to warrant their inclusion in the category of members who receive both magazines. Such General members make up 30 per cent of the respondents receiving both magazines.

Personal Characteristics, and Position and Interests in Adult Education. Sixty-seven per cent of those receiving both magazines are male as compared with 54 per cent of those receiving only Adult Leadership, and 23 per cent have the doctorate as compared with 14 per cent of the latter. The higher education and maleness of this group of respondents are explained by the fact that those who receive both magazines are also more likely to be wholly employed in adult education and to occupy positions of high-level responsibility. The positions in the field and levels of responsibility of the respective magazine recipients are presented in Tables 18 and 19. Thirty-six per cent of those who receive both magazines are wholly employed in adult education, compared with 19 per cent

Table 18: Magazine Received by the Type of Position in Adult Education

	Both	Adult Leadership only
Full-time paid, entirely adult education	36%	19%
Full-time paid, some adult education	43	47
Part-time paid	7	6
Volunteer or unpaid	8	18
No position in adult education	5	9
No answer	1	1
	100%	100%
Base of %	(861)	(1139)

Table 19: Magazine Received by Respondents With Activities in Adult Education by Their Level of Responsibility in Adult Education

Level of Responsibility	Both	Adult Leadership only
Top administrators*	46%	26%
Other administrators	15	12
Broad-gauge workers	14	14
Primarily workers	23	41
Unclassifiable	2	4
No answer, but holds present position	1	3
	100%	100%
Base of %	(813)**	(1031)**

of those who receive only the one magazine. Also, 46 per cent of the former group are top administrators, while only 26 per cent of the latter occupy such positions. Conversely, 41 per cent of the recipients of only Adult Leadership are "primarily workers," compared with 23 per cent of the recipients of both magazines. These facts point to the greater involvement in adult education of the recipients of both magazines.

Self-Perception as an Adult Educator. The previous chapter showed that those respondents who are full-time, salaried and concerned entirely with adult education are more likely than others to define themselves

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[*] See Chapter IV for the specific responsibilities included in the various "levels of responsibility."

[**] Those reporting no activities or not answering about activities and indicating no present position are excluded from the bases for per cents.

as "adult educators." Likewise, this tendency toward a well-developed self-image is especially characteristic of the recipients of both magazines. Table 20 shows that 57% of those respondents who receive both magazines think that the title is "very appropriate," while only 36% of the recipients of only Adult Leadership feel this way. This difference between magazine recipients in their self-definition as an adult educator is not due to different types of positions held. Regardless of the position in the field, those who receive both magazines are more likely to say that the title of adult educator is "very appropriate" than those who receive only Adult Leadership.[1] Therefore, there appears to be a difference in the depth of the respondents' commitment to the field of adult education such that the recipients of both magazines

Table 20: Magazine Received According to the Self-Description as an "Adult Educator"

	Both	Adult Leadership only
It is a very appropriate title and I often think of myself as an adult educator	57%	36%
It is a title which could appropriately be applied to me, but I seldom think of myself in this way	32	48
It is not an appropriate title for me	9	14
No answer	2	2
	100%	100%
Base of %	(861)	(1139)

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[1] This fact may be seen in Appendix C, Table 4.

define themselves as adult educators more often than do the recipients of only the single magazine.

Agencies in Adult Education. As may be seen in Tables 21 and 22, recipients of both magazines are also more likely to be located in formal adult education agencies, and, as we would expect from information in the previous chapter, more concerned with broad, comprehensive, and with liberal education. Conversely, those who receive only Adult Leadership are largely found in agencies whose adult education work is somewhat peripheral to the agencies' primary objectives, such as religious and youth serving agencies, and are more frequently interested in "social and interpersonal education" and "education for special roles and interests."

Table 21: Magazine Received by Respondents Working in Agencies by Selected Primary Agencies*

Primary Agency	Both	Adult Leadership only
Public school	19%	10%
Agricultural or home economics extension	5	7
A university evening or extension division	12	7
Other college or university division	11	8
Church or religious	8	13
Health or welfare agency	9	14
Library	8	4
Business or industry	4	4
Labor union	1	1
Youth-serving agency	7	11
Civic or fraternal	2	4
Other organizations	11	14
No answer	3	3
	100%	100%
Base of %	(835)	(1068)

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*Those who answered "no organization" are excluded from this table.

Table 22: Magazine Received by the Summarized Areas of Interest in Adult Education*

Summarized areas of interest	Both	Adult Leadership only
Providing broad, comprehensive adult education	44%	24%
Liberal education	33	22
Social and interpersonal education	54	67
Education for special roles and interests	36	49
Work-related education	42	37
Remedial education	9	4
No answer	2	2
	220%	205%
Base of %	(861)	(1139)

Personal Satisfactions Obtained From Membership. In view of the positions held in adult education, the self-image as an adult educator and the types of agencies characteristic of the recipients of both magazines, it is not surprising that the major satisfaction obtained from membership among this group is more frequently "the opportunity to contribute to the advancement of a profession of adult education." In response to the question, "What specific personal satisfactions do you get from your membership in the AEA?," almost twice as large a proportion of the recipients of both magazines as of those who receive only Adult Leadership checked the advancement of a profession. This fact may be seen in Table 23. Also, the group receiving both magazines is considerably more likely to check "personal association with others" as one of their major personal satisfactions.

In Table 24 we have combined the various answers to the question concerning personal satisfactions obtained from membership in order to

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[*] See Chapter IV for the specific interests included in the various "areas of interest."

Table 23: Magazine Received by Specific Personal Satisfactions Obtained From Membership

Personal satisfactions	Both	Adult Leadership only
Assisting in a needed social movement	33%	30%
Keeping up with developments in the field	85	80
Practical assistance on your adult education problems	41	42
The opportunity to contribute to the advance of a profession of adult education	39	22
Personal association with others of similar interests	37	19
Other	4	4
No answer, "none," DK	2	3
	241%	200%
	(861)	(1139)

Table 24: Magazine Received by Types of Personal Satisfactions Obtained From Membership

Type of personal satisfaction	Both	Adult Leadership only
Practical satisfactions only	32%	45%
All three types of satisfactions (Practical, Broad, and Sociable)	24	9
Both Practical and Broad, but nothing else	23	26
Both Practical and Sociable, but nothing else	10	6
All other references	8	9
No answer, "none," DK	3	5
	100%	100%
	(861)	(1139)

distinguish the respondents more clearly with respect to *type* of personal concerns. These types are as follows: *Practical* satisfactions, which includes respondents who referred to "practical assistance" and/or "keeping up with developments in the field"; *Broad* satisfactions, which include respondents who referred to advancing a "social movement" and/or a "profession"; and *Sociable* satisfactions, which include those who mentioned "personal association with others of similar interests." Table 24 shows that only 32 per cent of the recipients of *both* magazines referred exclusively to practical satisfactions, while almost 43 per cent of the recipients of only *Adult Leadership* made exclusive reference to this type of personal satisfaction. On the other hand, 24 per cent of the recipients of *both* magazines referred to all three types of personal satisfactions (Practical, Broad, Sociable), compared with only 9 per cent of the *Adult Leadership*-only recipients.

These differences between the respective magazine recipients indicate the existence of different needs and expectations regarding the AEA. Those who receive only *Adult Leadership* are more prone to look for practical assistance or information about the field, while those who receive *both* magazines express a wider range of personal satisfactions.

Therefore, to sum up the foregoing discussion, recipients of *both* magazines are more involved in adult education, as evidenced by the fact that they are more frequently found in agencies concerned with formal adult education and correlatively are more likely to hold full-time paid positions concerned entirely with adult education and to occupy top administrative positions. Also, they are more likely to think of themselves as adult educators. These facts are related to their greater interest in the areas of "liberal education" and "broad and comprehensive education," as compared with the *Adult Leadership* recipients who are more concerned with "social and interpersonal education" and "education for special roles and interests," which fields of interest likewise reflect the types of agencies within which the latter carry out their activities. Finally, presumably as a consequence of these social and personal differences between the two classes of magazine recipients, those who receive *both* magazines are more concerned with the professionalization function of the AEA and less concerned with the dissemination of practical techniques, and also more often derive satisfaction from "personal associations."

These differences suggest that we are dealing with two more or less distinctive groups of members and that the separation of the magazines should be maintained if at all possible in order adequately to answer the needs and interests of these respective members. A combination of the magazines into one publication would entail the mixing of two different viewpoints among adult educators, especially with regard to the questions of professionalization of the field and the methods used in the education of adults. At present those who receive both magazines are aware that they have a publication which pays special attention to their needs and interests, namely, *Adult Education*. If they so desire they can also read *Adult Leadership*, but a combination of the two into a single periodical might threaten the satisfaction derived from having a periodical designed exclusively for their group. In view of the marginal position of many "professional" adult educators, it would seem that any device which could enhance the self-image of these members as *bona fide* adult educators would be an important service of the AEA.

It will be recalled from Chapter III that one in five of the interviewees mentioned *Adult Leadership* when asked to name the "major weaknesses" of the AEA. Moreover, these criticisms were often stated in strong terms, as illustrated by the quotations in that chapter. Since the great majority of the interviewees are Professional or Contributing members, it appears that those who receive both magazines tend to be actually antagonistic toward Adult Leadership. This point further indicates that a combination of the two magazines would be a mistake at this time and also suggests that many of the recipients of Adult Education would become more favorably disposed to the organization if they did not have to receive Adult Leadership as well.

Moreover, many volunteers and some full-time paid persons who are only partly concerned with adult education may be antagonistic to a periodical which also takes up the problems of full-time professionals and which might occasionally "talk over their heads." These members are also taxed with problems of recognition of their activities on the part of other agency personnel and the general public. Their work might only be hampered further by feelings of inadequacy derived from comparison with full-time and fully committed professionals. Of course, they should be given the opportunity to subscribe to the more professional magazine if they wish.

A word should be added concerning the relatively large proportion of General members (18 per cent) alluded to in the beginning of this chapter, who obtain copies of Adult Education. While the practice of reading the magazine without subscribing to it means less income for the organization, it is possible that the borrowing of copies may actually stimulate interaction between adult educators in a way beneficial to the organization's goals for adult education. This possibility was suggested by the comment of an interviewee when asked about his type of membership:

> I hold a General membership. The bureau has an organizational membership, so we all get a chance to see Adult Education also. When it arrives we pass it around, and if there is something of special interest we all read it and then hold a meeting to discuss it. This is better than if we all received Adult Education because there is too much of a tendency to put publications aside and never get to them.

Therefore, the desire to obtain a copy of Adult Education may actually stimulate an exchange of ideas among adult educators. However, because there are undoubtedly a great many borrowers who do not have the opportunity to enter into such symposiums, the editors of Adult Education might encourage their non-subscription readers to subscribe to the magazine, pointing out the advantage of receiving it regularly and of developing their own professional file of copies.

Furthermore, because a certain proportion of the General members who receive only Adult Leadership and do not read Adult Education have a good deal in common with the recipients of both magazines, such as holding full-time paid and administrative positions, having a well-developed self-image as an adult educator and being concerned with professionalization, it might be worth-while for the editors of Adult Leadership to address a special plea to these members to subscribe to Adult Education as well. It could be pointed out to these members that the content and policies of the latter magazine would fill out their interests better than a single magazine which is directed to lower level workers in the field.

In the light of these considerations we conclude that it is advisable to permit the members to subscribe to either one or the other magazine, or both. Even if a certain proportion of those who presently receive both magazines dropped their subscription to Adult Leadership, there is the possibility that a campaign directed toward General members would gain many subscriptions to Adult Education and thereby make up the difference in income.

2. Conference Attendance

Conference attendance is the second major means by which the members can establish contact with their organization. Therefore, the present section will consider the characteristics of those members of the AEA who have ever attended an annual conference as contrasted with those who have never done so. It should be mentioned at the outset, however, that the differences which will be brought out are strikingly similar to the differences found in the preceding section between the respective magazine recipients. In view of the relationship between conference attendance and magazine received, as shown in Table 25, this fact is not surprising. It is clear from Table 25 that twice as large a proportion of conference-goers as of those who have never attended "receive" both magazines.

Table 25: Conference Attendance by Type of Membership and Magazine Received*

	Have attended		Have not attended	
Professional, Contributing	47%	66%	23%	33%
General - receive both magazines	19		10	
General - receive only one magazine	34		67	
	100%		100%	
Base of %	(594)		(1399)	

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*Those who did not answer regarding attendance are excluded from this table.

Personal Characteristics, and Position, Interests and Agency in Adult Education. As in the case of the recipients of both magazines, the conference attendees are more often male and more often hold doctorates. The conference attendees, however, differ more sharply from the non-attendees than the recipients of both magazines were found to differ from those who receive only *Adult Leadership*. The conference attendees have twice as large a proportion of doctorates as do the non-attendees (28 per cent and 13 per cent, respectively), while the recipients of both magazines are somewhat sharply distinguished from the recipients of *Adult Leadership*-only with regard to the proportion of doctorates (23 per cent and 14 per cent, respectively). Also, the conference attendees tend to be much older than the non-attendees, whereas there was no difference between the magazine recipients with respect to age. Half of the conference attendees are 50 years or older, compared with a third of the non-attendees.

No doubt these characteristics of age and educational attainment distinguish the respondents with regard to conference attendance more sharply than with regard to the number of magazines received because of the further fact that conference attendees are much more likely to hold full-time positions concerned entirely with adult education and also to have been in the field of adult education much longer as a paid worker. Tables 26 and 27 show the present positions of conference-goers and the length of time they have held a paid position in the field.

These considerations indicate that conference attendance is a much better indicator of the respondents' commitment to the field of adult education than is the number of magazines they receive. In other words, while a certain outstanding measure of involvement in adult education is

Table 26: Conference Attendance by Type of Position Held in Adult Education*

Type of Position	Have attended	Have not attended
Full-time paid, concerned entirely with adult education	46%	17%
Full-time paid, with some responsibilities in adult education	35	50
Part-time employed	7	7
Volunteers	9	16
No present position	2	1
No answer	1	1
	100%	100%
Base of %	(594)	(1399)

Table 27: Conference Attendance Among Respondents With Paid Positions by the Number of Years They Have Held a Paid Position in Adult Education**

No. of years in paid position	Have attended	Have not attended
Less than 2 years	3%	11%
3 to 5 years	15	23
6 to 10 years	29	26
11 to 15 years	22 >81	18 >66
16 years or over	30	22
	100%	100%
	(501)	(925)

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[*] Those who did not answer the question concerning conference attendance are excluded from this table.

[**] Those who did not answer the question concerning either conference attendance or number of years in a paid position are excluded from this table.

characteristic of the recipients of both magazines, an even greater involvement characterizes those who attend the conferences. This is to be expected inasmuch as attendance at an annual conference entails much more effort on the part of the members than does the reading of a magazine, and therefore only those members who are very deeply concerned with adult education bother to attend.

Table 28 shows, as we would expect, that conference attendees are also more likely to hold top-level positions in the field of adult education. Half of the conference attendees are "top administrators," compared with only one-fourth of those who have never attended a conference. This difference is also slightly larger than that which occurred between those receiving both or only one magazine, further indicating the greater involvement in the field required for conference attendance as contrasted with subscribing to a magazine.

Table 28: Conference Attendance Among Respondents With Activities in Adult Education by Level of Responsibility[*]

Level of Responsibility	Have attended	Have not attended
Top administrators	51%	25%
Other administrators	14	12
Broad-gauge workers	14	13
Primarily workers	17	37
Unclassifiable	3	3
No answer	1	2
	100%	100%
Base of %	(560)	(1360)

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[*] Those who did answer regarding conference attendance and those with no activities in adult education are excluded from this table.

It is seen in Tables 29 and 30 that the conference attendees are characterized in the same way as the recipients of both magazines with regard to agency and area of interest. Moreover, the same agencies and areas of interest in adult education which differentiated magazine recipients again differentiate the conference-goers to an even greater degree. This is in line with our previous comments and reflects the greater concern with formal adult education and providing broad, comprehensive and liberal education among the conference-goers than among the recipients of both magazines.

Because the characteristics which differentiate conference-goers from other members, i.e., type of agency, position in the field, and areas of major interest involve the economic position of the educator and are therefore highly stable features, it may be unrealistic to

Table 29: Conference Attendance Among Respondents Working in Agencies by Selected Primary Agencies*

Agency	Have attended	Have not attended
Public school	25%	10%
Agricultural or home economics extension	6	6
A university evening or extension division	16	6
Other college or university division	11	8
Church or religious organization	3	14
Health or welfare agency	6	14
Library	7	5
Business or industry	2	4
Labor union	1	1
Youth serving agency	3	12
Civic or fraternal organization	2	3
Other organizations	16	13
No answer	2	4
	100%	100%
Base of %	(587)	(1309)

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* Those who did not answer regarding conference attendance are excluded from this table.

Table 30: Conference Attendance by the Summarized Areas of Interest in Adult Education*

Summarized areas of interest	Have attended	Have not attended
Providing broad, comprehensive adult education	51%	25%
Liberal education	38	23
Social and interpersonal education	48	67
Education for special roles and interests	35	47
Work-related education	41	38
Remedial education	10	5
No answer	1	2
	224%**	207%**
Base of %	(594)	(1399)

expect a much larger proportion of the current membership to participate in the organization. If a larger turnout at conferences is desired, it would be wise to direct attention primarily to those already more involved in the field.

Membership in Other National Organizations. It has been suggested by analysts of voluntary associations that membership in other organizations reduces the likelihood of full participation in most of the organizations to which the individual belongs, especially if the various organizations have conflicting goals or values.[2] If the different organizations are all oriented toward the same societal goal, then participation is more likely to keep pace with an increase in the individual's memberships. That this may be the case with the members of the AEA is indicated by the fact that conference attendees more often belong to national, state, and local organizations in adult education than non-attendees, as seen in Table 31. In other words, membership in other organizations in adult education is not related to lesser participation but is instead related to greater participation. Moreover, among members of other organizations the greatest tendency to attend the conferences occurs among those who belong to state or regional councils. This may be due to the fact that the AEA has made special efforts to develop relations with such organizations, while local or city councils are more remote from the AEA and have less funds for sending a representative to the conferences. Members of national organizations are probably faced with the problem of divided loyalties more frequently than are members in either of the foregoing types of organizations; but then they are also more likely to hold jobs in agencies which can afford to send them to the conferences. Thus, national and local organization members tend to come to the conferences to the same extent, although there may be

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* Those who did not answer regarding conference attendance are excluded from this table.

** Totals exceed 100% because respondents indicated more than one area of interest.

[2] Sills, The Volunteers, p. 36 and pp. 59-61.

Table 31: Conference Attendance by Membership in Other Adult Education Organizations*

Type of organization	Have attended	Have not attended
Local or city council of adult education	37%	14%
State or regional council of adult education	56	21
National organization concerned with adult education other than AEA	62	40
None of these	15	43
	170%	118%
Base of %	(589)	(1351)

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* Those who did not answer the question concerning either conference attendance or membership in other organizations are excluded from this table.

different reasons as to why they turn out for the conferences less often than those in state or regional councils. In any case, it is plain that members of other organizations in adult education, regardless of the level of the organization, are more likely to attend the annual conferences than are non-members.

Location of the Conferences. One would expect the location of the annual conference to affect attendance, as those closer to it could attend more easily. This possibility is often realized by national organizations and accounts for the practice of alternating from year to year the region within which conferences are held. It is of interest, therefore, to see whether the practice of shifting the AEA's conference has had the intended effect over the years of making the conferences equally accessible to members in all parts of the country.

The similarity found in Table 32 between the regional distribution of those who have ever attended and that of the total sample indicates that the goal of achieving representative attendance by alternating the location of the conference has been fulfilled. However, in examining

Table 32: Ever Attended Conference, and Attended Cincinnati Conference, by Region of Residence

Region	Ever attended	Attended at Cincinnati	Total sample
Northeast	31%	29%	31%
Central	38	51	35
Southeast	8	10	10
West	22	10	22
Non-contiguous states, Puerto Rico, and APO's	1	-	2
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(594)	(177)	(2000)

the regional distribution for only the last year it appears that the location of the conference in Cincinnati did have an effect, mainly on the residents of the Central and Western states. While 35 per cent of the total sample reside in the Central states, 51 per cent of those who attended the Cincinnati Conference came from this region. Also, whereas 22 per cent of the sample reside in the Western states, only 10 per cent of the Cincinnati attendees were from these states.

This suggests that in order to obtain regional representation in the future it would be wise for the AEA to continue alternating the regions within which it holds the annual conference. Failure to do so might result in a loss of interest and consequently a loss of members among those who live in the more distant parts of the country.

Now that we have discussed the chief objective avenues for maintaining contact with the organization, we will turn our attention to certain subjective aspects such as knowledge, overall satisfaction, and interest concerning the AEA, which result from and contribute to the members' actual involvement in the organization.

B. The Members' Knowledge of the Organization

One of the assumptions of a system of democratic elections is that the electorate is well enough informed of the system, candidates, and issues to make wise decisions. Presumably, an electorate can make responsible decisions only if it is informed. Perhaps the *sine qua non* is knowledge about the system of election. Also of interest is the amount of knowledge the members have concerning the important issue of financial arrangements. Accordingly, the following question was asked of AEA members: Which of the following do you feel you could explain from memory to someone not a member of the AEA?

How officers of the AEA are chosen.
How members of the Delegate Assembly are elected.
How the AEA is financed.

The proportions of the members in our sample who claimed some knowledge of organizational practices pertaining to the three items of information are presented in Table 33. This table shows that 45 per cent of the members are not informed on any of the items mentioned. It is impossible to determine whether this proportion of 45 per cent is "high" or "low" because we do not have data exactly comparable to the responses to our question for other organizations of the same type as the AEA. Therefore, we may turn instead to judgments in the light of the goals of the organization. If the principle of membership representation by elections is considered as a highly essential aspect of the organization, then it is clear that the level of knowledge regarding the election system is "very low." Only 38 per cent of the members knew how the officers are chosen, and only 25 per cent knew how the Delegate Assembly is elected. On the other hand, if the goal of achieving the widest possible membership and of dispensing services is uppermost, regardless of the level of active participation in the organization, then the level of ignorance may actually be "normal." That is to say, the lack of knowledge about

Table 33: The Percentage of Members Who Are Informed About Three Organizational Operations

	%
How officers are chosen	38
How the Delegate Assembly is elected	25
How the AEA is financed	35
None of them	45
No answer	4
	147%*
Base of %	(2000)

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*Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses.

such "academic" matters as elections and financing is not to be regarded as a serious obstacle to organizational effectiveness.

But there is a third alternative, for if the AEA is content to maintain two different kinds of constituencies, i.e., the organization-oriented and the service-oriented, and if lack of information is confined to the service-oriented group, then the organization may not really suffer from ignorance about its operations. That this may be the case concerning the AEA is indicated by the fact that those who are best informed are the recipients of both magazines who have attended an annual conference. Considering the greater degree of active interest indicated by these characteristics, it appears that information about the organization's formal structure is more or less confined to those who, because of their active interest, are more needful of such information.

It is clear from Table 34 that type of membership and magazine received is related to the amount of information regardless of whether the member has or has not attended an annual conference. Also, conference attendees are more likely to be informed than non-attendees. In view of

Table 34: Information by Conference Attendance, Type of Membership, and Magazines Received

	Attended a conference			Never attended a conference		
Mean no. of items	1.59			0.72		
	*Type of membership			Type of membership		
	P-C	G-2	G-1	P-C	G-2	G-1
Mean no. of items	1.96	1.44	1.23	0.86	0.81	0.71

*
P-C: Professional and Contributing
G-2: General member, both magazines
G-1: General member, one magazine

these relationships between information, on the one hand, and both magazine received and conference attendance, on the other, it is probable that the low level of information which characterizes the entire sample does not jeopardize the organization's democratic principles to the extent that would at first appear. In other words, ignorance of the AEA's operations is more or less restricted to those who are less likely to take an active part in the AEA as an ongoing organization.

It emerges from Table 35 that length of membership is also related to the amount of information. The increase in information which occurs with length of membership indicates that there is a certain "time lag" in the respondents' acquisition of knowledge about the organization.[3] This suggests that greater efforts should be made to inform new members of the AEA's operations. While it would be unrealistic to assume that information about the AEA is sufficient to stimulate an active interest in the organization, it is nevertheless clear that an organization which adheres to democratic principles should try to keep its interested members as well informed as possible in order to provide them with sufficient grounds for decision-making. Also, although greater knowledge of the organization's operations cannot insure active participation among

Table 35: Information by Year Joined the AEA

Year joined	Mean no. of items
1951-52	1.49
1953-54	0.96
1955-56	0.79
1957-58	0.47

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[3] This relationship between length of membership in the AEA and information remains essentially the same within each type of membership and among both conference attendees and non-attendees.

more recent joiners, it may forestall the common feeling among new members who are interested in becoming active in the organization that they are outsiders simply because they possess less knowledge of the organization's *modus operandi*.

Since the items of information on which the respondents were tested for knowledge of the AEA included "how the officers are elected" and "how the Delegate Assembly is elected," it is natural that those who have been elected to a position in the organization would exhibit more knowledge according to our index. However, election to a position is not the only determinant of the amount of information which the AEA's officials possess. As shown in Table 36, those of the Executive Committee, Delegates, and other committee members as a whole who are more *interested* in the organization tend to have more information, as do conference-goers. It is apparent that both interest and involvement in the AEA are related to the amount of knowledge which the respondents have about the organization. In view of the independent role of *interest*, the next section will briefly examine this factor in order to determine who are the more interested members. Before passing to this examination of interest, the foregoing discussion may be recapitulated as follows: While the sample as a whole exhibits a relatively low level

Table 36: Mean Number of Information Items by Involvement in the AEA and Interest in the Organization

		Have never held a position in AEA	
	Executive Committee, Delegates and Other Committee Members	Attended conference	Never attended conference
Very interested	2.61	1.52	1.13
Moderately interested	1.82	1.12	0.83
Slightly, or not interested	1.56	0.84	0.39

of information concerning the AEA's operations, those who are more involved in the AEA's activities are better informed than other respondents. Also, respondents who have been in the organization a greater length of time tend to have more information. And finally, regardless of involvement in the organization, those respondents who are more interested in the organization express more knowledge of its operations.

C. The Members' Interest in the AEA as an Organization

The relationship between interest in the organization and information concerning the AEA has already been mentioned. Here we will try to determine what characterizes those members who are more interested in the AEA as an organization. The members were asked the following question: "How interested are you in general in the activities of the AEA as an organization?" Table 37 shows that 22 per cent of the sample were "very interested," 45 per cent "moderately interested," and 32 per cent indicated lesser degrees of interest. It should be stressed that a third of the respondents were either slightly or not interested in the AEA as an organization. In subsequent tables we will combine those who are "very" and "moderately" interested and denote these as the "interested" group.

Table 37: Per Cent of Respondents Who Are Interested in the Organization

Very interested	22%
Moderately interested	45
Slightly interested	27
Not interested	5
No answer	1
	100%
Base of %	(2000)

Although interest in the AEA as an organization is related to the amount of information which the respondents have about the organization independently of their involvement in the AEA, by and large those who are more interested also tend to be more involved. Involvement, as measured by level of position in the AEA, attendance at the annual conferences, and type of membership, is highly related to interest, as Table 38 shows. Conference-goers tend to be more interested in the AEA regardless of their type of membership. Also, delegates and officers are noticeably more interested in the AEA, and officers more so than delegates.

The lower degree of interest of the delegates relative to the officers may indicate a certain measure of apathy concerning the operation of the AEA, possibly stemming from lesser participation in decision-making. Or this "interest gap" may be indicative of a desire to let the officers make the decisions and carry the responsibility for the organization, a point which will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

It is noteworthy that members of other committees are no more interested in the organization than conference-goers who have never held a position in the AEA. As the bracket in Table 38 shows, 75 per cent of all conference attendees who have never held a position in the AEA said they were "interested" in the organization, and only 76 per cent of respondents who have been Committee members (but have held no higher position in the organization) were "interested." This suggests that committee membership does not contribute to general interest in the organization but is perhaps a peripheral activity concerned primarily with sectional issues or specialized interests.

It should also be pointed out in Table 38 that regardless of attendance at the conferences and type of membership in the AEA, among

Table 38: Interest in the AEA by Involvement in the Organization[*]

	% Interested		Base of %[**]	
Executive Committee and Officers	98%		(50)	
Delegate Assembly member	89%		(158)	
Other committee member	76%		(78)	
No position in AEA but attended conference				
Professional or Contributing member	76%	75%	(121)	(329)
General member (both magazines)	78%		(70)	
General member (*Adult Leadership* only)	73%		(138)	
No position in AEA and never attended conference				
Professional or Contributing member	68%	61%	(315)	(1367)
General member (both magazines)	67%		(140)	
General member (*Adult Leadership* only)	57%		(912)	

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[*] In this table members have been classified by the highest office which they ever held in the AEA.

[**] Those who did not answer regarding interest are excluded from the bases for per cents.

those respondents who have never held positions in the AEA those who receive both magazines are more interested in the organization than those who receive only Adult Leadership. As a consequence, we would expect to find that the more concerned respondents would exhibit the same characteristics as the recipients of both magazines and conference-goers. This turns out to be the case, inasmuch as those who are more interested are likely to be persons with full-time responsibilities in adult education, administrators, and persons located in more formal agencies, such as public schools and university extension. Also, their interests are more likely to center on broad, comprehensive and liberal education. Thus, "interest in the AEA as an organization" is reflected in greater involvement in adult education as well as in the AEA itself. (Tables 39 through 42 show the relationship of these factors to "interest.")

Table 39: Interest in the AEA by Type of Position in Adult Education*

Type of Position	% Interested	Base of %
Full-time paid, entirely in adult education	75	(520)
Full-time paid, partly in adult education	62	(910)
Part-time paid	73	(133)
Volunteers	63	(277)
No position	60	(143)

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[*] Those who did not answer the question concerning either type of position or interest are excluded from this table.

Table 40: Interest in the AEA by Level of Responsibility in Adult Education for Those with Activities*

Level of Responsibility	% Interested	Base of %
Top administrators	73	(642)
Other administrators	72	(242)
Broad-gauge workers	66	(258)
Primarily workers	59	(609)

Table 41: Interest in the AEA by Selected Primary Agencies in Adult Education**

Agency	% Interested	Base of %
Public school	79	(273)
A university evening or extension division	78	(174)
Labor union	78	(18)
Professional association	75	(16)
Foundation	73	(15)
Civic or fraternal	69	(56)
Government agencies	69	(48)
Other college or university division	69	(174)
Agricultural or home economics extension	68	(114)
Library	67	(104)
Health or welfare agency	66	(175)
Youth serving	64	(173)
(No organization)	63	(97)
Adult education council	62	(69)
Business or industry	62	(69)
Church or religious organization	48	(197)

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* Those who did not answer the question concerning interest are excluded from this table. Those who did not answer the question concerning responsibilities, those who have no activities, and those whose activities are unclassifiable by level are also excluded.

** Those who did not answer the question concerning primary agency or whose primary agency is unascertainable and those who did not answer the question concerning interest are excluded from this table.

Table 42: Interest in the AEA by the Summarized Areas of Interest in Adult Education*

Summarized areas of interest	% Interested	Base of %**
Remedial education	79	(131)
Broad, comprehensive education	78	(652)
Work-related education	72	(775)
Liberal education	70	(540)
Education for special roles, interests	65	(868)
Social and interpersonal education	62	(1262)

D. The Members' Satisfaction With the Program and Activities of the AEA

Having considered the dimension of interest in the AEA "as an organization," we will now turn to another dimension of the members' general evaluation of the AEA, namely, their overall satisfaction with its program and activities. While interest and satisfaction are related in the sample as a whole, as will be shown in a moment, we will see that various groups differ in the degree to which their satisfaction with the AEA is commensurate with their interest in the organization.

In order to determine the respondents' overall impression of the program and activities of the AEA, the following question was asked: "In terms of your objectives for adult education, how satisfied do you feel with the program and activities of the AEA?" As may be seen in Table 43, almost none of the respondents said that they were "very satisfied" with the program and activities of the AEA; on the other hand, only 6 per cent expressed dissatisfaction. A third of the respondents

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[*] Those who did not answer the question concerning either area of interest or interest in the AEA are excluded from this table.

[**] Bases of per cents add to more than 2000 because respondents indicated more than one area of interest.

Table 43: Per Cent of Respondents Who Are Satisfied With the AEA

Very satisfied	3%	35%
Satisfied	32	
Mixed feelings, both pro and con	51	
Dissatisfied	5	6%
Very dissatisfied	1	
Don't know; no answer	8	
	100%	
Base of %	(2000)	

expressed some degree of satisfaction, and a half said they had "mixed feelings, both pro and con." This does not reveal a striking degree of satisfaction with the organization. That half of the respondents had mixed feelings suggests an attitude on the part of many that all is not well.

Table 44 sets forth the relationship between interest and satisfaction. Forty-seven per cent of those respondents who are "very interested" in the organization are satisfied with the AEA, compared with

Table 44: Satisfaction with the AEA by Interest in the Organization*

	Very interested		Moderately interested		Slightly interested		Not interested	
Very satisfied	9%	47%	2%	39%	1%	32%	—	21%
Satisfied	38		37		31		21	
Mixed feelings, both pro and con	50	53	58	61	60	68	51	79
Dissatisfied	3		3		8		28	
	100%		100%		100%		100%	
Base of %	(417)		(828)		(491)		(82)	

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*Those who did not answer the question concerning either interest or satisfaction are excluded from this table.

only 21 per cent of those who are not interested. However, it should be noted that as many as 53 per cent of those respondents who expressed the highest degree of interest have "mixed feelings" or are "dissatisfied" with the AEA. Also, a sizable proportion of those who are only "slightly" or "not interested" in the organization are nevertheless satisfied (31 per cent). This makes it clear that for a large portion of the sample, interest and satisfaction do not necessarily go hand in hand.

Contrary to the situation which is found for interest in the AEA, those most satisfied with its program and activities tend to be least involved in adult education. As shown in Table 45, those respondents who have "no present position" are more likely to be satisfied than those who do have positions, and among this latter group those who are most likely to be satisfied are the part-time paid workers and the volunteers. This is generally the reverse of the case of interest in the organization, where it is found that full-time paid workers are more likely to be interested than all other persons and those holding no position are least likely to be interested.

Table 45: Satisfaction by Position in Adult Education*

	% Satisfied	Base of %
All of full-time paid	34	(500)
Part of full-time paid	38	(828)
Part-time	43	(127)
Volunteer	41	(249)
No position	45	(112)

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* Those who did not answer the question concerning either type of position or interest are excluded from this table.

If we consider the degree of satisfaction expressed by the respondents working in the various agencies, we can observe equally radical departures from a similar table (Table 41) which showed the rank-order of agencies according to their *interest* in the organization. Table 46 sets forth the proportions of respondents in the different agencies who are *satisfied* with the AEA's program and activities. While public school adult educators ranked in first place in interest, they fall to sixth place in their expression of satisfaction. Also, university evening or extension personnel ranked second place in interest but hold eighth place in satisfaction. The same discrepancy between interest and satisfaction may be noted with respect to those working in professional associations and foundations, both agencies ranking higher in

Table 46: Satisfaction With the AEA by Selected Primary Agencies*

	% Satisfied	Base of %
Labor union	53%	(17)
Church or religious organization	47%	(180)
(No organization)	44%	(78)
Agricultural or home economics extension	42%	(107)
Civic or fraternal organization	42%	(54)
Youth serving agency	40%	(164)
Health or welfare agency	40%	(204)
Other college or university division	40%	(165)
Public schools	38%	(259)
Business or industry	33%	(63)
A university evening or extension division	32%	(168)
Government agencies	30%	(43)
Professional associations	29%	(17)
Foundations	27%	(15)
Library	24%	(85)
Adult Education Council, or Center	21%	(14)

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* Those who either did not answer the question concerning primary agency or whose primary agency is unascertainable and those who did not answer the question concerning satisfaction are excluded from this table.

interest than satisfaction. It should be noted here that those agencies which rank higher in interest than satisfaction are generally those concerned with adult education as a primary goal rather than as a means of achieving special goals. Conversely, certain agencies rank somewhat higher in satisfaction than in interest. These agencies are church or religious organizations, business or industry, and youth serving agencies. These organizations, in contrast to those mentioned above, are concerned with adult education as an instrument in the achievement of specialized goals.

Because of the previous relationship between agencies employing the member and his areas of interest in adult education, it is not surprising that respondents interested in "social and interpersonal" education and education for special roles and interests express a a somewhat greater degree of satisfaction than respondents interested in "liberal education" and "broad, comprehensive adult education," as shown in Table 47.

Table 47: Satisfaction by the Summarized Areas of Interest in Adult Education*

	Per cent satisfied	Base of %**
Social and interpersonal	40%	(1131)
Education for special roles and interests	40%	(902)
Work-related education	40%	(733)
Remedial education	36%	(124)
Providing broad, comprehensive adult education	35%	(621)
Liberal education	30%	(507)

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[*] Those who did not answer the question concerning either area of interest or satisfaction are excluded from this table.

[**] Bases of % total more than 2000 because the respondents indicated more than one area of interest.

Our discussion points to the importance of satisfaction with the program and activities of the AEA as somewhat independent of the degree of interest in the AEA "as an organization." This is clearly revealed with respect to the relationship between satisfaction and the involvement of the respondents in the AEA. It was found above in the discussion of interest that the higher the level of involvement in the AEA, the greater the degree of interest. Satisfaction, however, shows generally the opposite relationship with involvement, as found in Table 47. Those who are least involved in the AEA are most likely to be satisfied with its program and activities, and those most involved, i.e., the Executive Committee members, are least satisfied. It should be noted, however, that the Delegate Assembly members exhibit a slightly higher level of satisfaction than either the Executive Committee or other committee members. The lesser satisfaction of the Executive Committee members may be partly due to their greater awareness of the problems of the organization.

Table 48 reveals differences in satisfaction between Professional or Contributing members, General members who claimed to receive both magazines, and General members who receive Adult Leadership only, in order of increasing satisfaction. Moreover, the factors of conference attendance and type of membership are independently related to the expression of satisfaction with the AEA. Thirty per cent of the conference attendees who have never held a position in the AEA are "satisfied," compared with 42% of non-attendees.

This tendency for the more involved members to be least satisfied may be due to their greater awareness of the problems confronting the organization. Those who are more remote from the AEA's activities, on the other hand, may be inclined to give the organization the benefit of

Table 48: Satisfaction by Involvement in the AEA*

	Per cent satisfied		Base of %**	
Executive Committee	26	31%	(49)	(280)
Delegate Assembly member	34		(157)	
Committee member	29		(74)	
No position in AEA but attended conference				
Professional or Contributing member	25	30%	(118)	(316)
General member (both magazines)	28		(68)	
General member (*Adult Leadership* only)	36		(130)	
No position in AEA and never attended conference				
Professional or Contributing member	37	42%	(281)	(1232)
General member (both magazines)	40		(134)	
General member (*Adult Leadership* only)	44		(817)	

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[*] In this table members have been classified by the highest level of office which they ever held in the AEA.

[**] Those who did not answer the question concerning satisfaction are excluded from the bases of per cents.

the doubt concerning its program and activities. This would also explain why persons in informal agencies and areas of interest are more satisfied than persons in more formal agencies and areas since the former constitute the majority of those who have never attended a conference.

* * * * *

Summary

In the present chapter we characterized the members according to the magazines which they received and attendance at the annual conferences, these two features constituting the major avenues of contact with the organization. We then turned to the members' knowledge of the organization and their interest and overall satisfaction. It was indicated that in certain groups of respondents, principally those less involved in both adult education and the AEA, satisfaction is higher and interest is lower than in other groups. We attempted to explain this fact by reference to the differential awareness of the AEA's problems which presumably affects the degree of overall satisfaction but not the degree of interest. In the following chapter we will continue to consider the members' relationships with the AEA with greater emphasis upon the members' evaluations of specific aspects of the organization as well as the specific personal satisfactions they obtain from membership.

Chapter VI

MEMBERS' RELATIONSHIPS TO THE AEA*

Part 2

In the previous chapter we have dealt primarily with such factors as overall interest and satisfaction. In order to understand these general assessments more clearly, it is necessary to probe into the members' specific satisfactions, their images of the AEA, and the grounds for their evaluations of the organization. Therefore, the present chapter will deal with the members' specific satisfactions from membership and their images and evaluations of the AEA.

A. Personal Satisfactions Obtained From Membership

It is to be expected that an organization with as large and as heterogeneous a membership as the AEA will be called upon for a variety of services and activities and that different groups will derive different satisfactions from their membership. In order to discover what these satisfactions are the members were asked the following question, already briefly referred to in the preceding chapter: "What specific personal satisfactions do you get from your membership in the AEA?" The personal satisfactions listed in the questionnaire are shown in Table 49.

This table makes it clear that the great majority of the respondents view the AEA as a source of news about the field of adult education. Another large proportion (41 per cent) feel that the provision of "practical assistance" is highly important. Other personal satisfactions, in descending order of the frequency with which they were mentioned, are

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* This chapter was written by Sam Sieber.

"assisting in a social movement," "advancement of a profession," and "personal association." None of these last three was mentioned by as many as a third of the respondents. This suggests that for the majority the AEA is chiefly an information-dispensing organization and perhaps also a source of practical assistance. Only for a minority is it an agency in the promotion of such broad goals as a profession or social movement of adult education, or as a meeting ground for adult educators.

Table 49: The Specific Personal Satisfactions Obtained from Membership

Keeping up with developments in the field	82%
Practical assistance on your adult education problems	41
Assisting in a needed social movement	32
The opportunity to contribute to the advancement of a profession of adult education	29
Personal association with others of similar interests	21
Other specific personal satisfactions	4
"None," no answer, don't know	3
	212%*
Base of %	(2000)

That only 21 per cent of the respondents obtain satisfactions from "personal association" is undoubtedly a reflection of the small number of actively participating members. Among the most active participants, personal association is frequently a highly important gratification from membership. This is shown by the comments of those interviewed, almost all of whom play or have played important roles in the association. When asked about "the main satisfactions" they obtain from membership, 48 per cent of the interviewees who answered this question[1]

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[*] Exceeds 100% because the respondents indicated more than one personal satisfaction.

[1] Several interviewees were not asked this question because they were past or current staff members. In a few cases the question was omitted due to the limitation of time.

mentioned this type of gratification. The next most frequently cited gratification was the publication program with 36 per cent of the interviewees expressing satisfaction with the magazines or other publications. Thus, the chance to meet other adult educators is apparently the chief satisfaction which these active participants derive from membership. A member of the Delegate Assembly and Chairman of a special committee expressed his main satisfaction as follows: "Associating with other adult educators, especially sharing ideas and learning from professionals." And a former Executive Committee member said:

> The main satisfaction is the people that I have come to know. I have been able to call on them and ask advice from them. . . . I meet people through the AEA who are in many different specialized areas, and if I am asked to set up a program in something I don't know much about, I am able to write them for advice.

Other prominent members of the organization made the same point:

> Primarily because it keeps me in touch with people doing the same kind of work. It is the only cutting edge in the field. Without the AEA I could meet union people, but I wouldn't meet people doing group work with those in the voluntary associations, such as those in the Junior Leagues, the Red Cross, etc.

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> I've attended about half the conferences and enjoyed seeing people, exchanging copies of bulletins, and talking first hand with people who have tried out different courses.

One interviewee went so far as to suggest that the AEA should abandon every activity except the annual conferences, which afford the requisite "rubbing of shoulders." Thus, the satisfactions of the leaders and most active members appear to differ considerably from those of the rank and file.

The importance of personal association among the active members is again shown in Table 50, which compares conference attendees and non-attendees with respect to their personal satisfactions. While the satisfaction most frequently cited by both groups is "keeping up with developments," the second most frequently checked satisfaction among the conference-goers is "personal association," with 57 per cent mentioning this feature. This is the one satisfaction least often mentioned by those who have never attended a conference, only 14 per cent so responding. This fact makes it probable that the attendees and non-attendees have different avenues for obtaining knowledge of developments in the field, the former relying more often on personal contacts and the latter on the publications.

Table 50: Conference Attendance by Personal Satisfactions*

Personal satisfactions	Have attended	Have not attended
Personal association	57%	14%
Advancement of a profession	47	22
Assistance in a needed social movement	41	28
Practical assistance	36	44
Keeping up with developments	83	82
	268%**	197%**
Base of %	(549)	(1399)

In view of the outstanding concern with personal contacts among conference-goers, it is perhaps worth-while to consider some means of facilitating this exchange of views and source materials at the conferences. One of the interviewees recalled the "curbstone conference" which had been promoted in past years and which had been aimed at getting to meet people. As the interviewee pointed out:

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* Those who did not answer concerning conference attendance are excluded from this table.

** Totals exceed 100% because the respondents indicated more than one personal satisfaction.

> It provided an opportunity for individuals to meet someone; they just put their names on the bulletin board. It provides a middle-man. It consisted of informal meetings for groups who wanted to get together. . . .I don't know why it didn't go on. /The individual who initiated it/ arranged at least 200 interviews.

Some such method of bringing people together informally in small groups may widen the range of personal interests involved in these discussions, reduce the time spent in "looking up" somebody, and encourage those to speak up who would be reticent in a more formal gathering.

It should also be noted in Table 50 that the conference-goers mentioned "the opportunity to contribute to the advancement of a profession of adult education" third in the order of frequency, with almost half of them checking this satisfaction. Among the inactive group, on the other hand, only 22 per cent cited this activity. The non-attendees also mentioned "practical assistance" more often than the conference-goers (44 per cent and 36 per cent, respectively).

In view of the tendency for conference-goers to be more interested in the AEA as an organization, as was shown in the preceding chapter, it is not surprising that interest is found to be related to the various personal satisfactions in much the same way as conference attendance was. Table 51 shows that those who mentioned "personal association" are most likely to be interested in the organization, with "advancement of a profession," "assistance in a needed social movement," "practical assistance," and "keeping up with developments" following in that order. While the differences are not large, they seem to indicate that a concern for the more practical services of the AEA, i.e., practical assistance and keeping up with the field, is commonly associated with less interest, while concern for the broader goals of the organization and personal association is characterized by greater degrees of interest.

Table 51: Interest in the AEA by Personal Satisfactions*

Personal satisfactions	% Interested	Base of %
Personal association	87%	(531)
Advancement of a profession	84	(586)
Assistance in a needed social movement	79	(628)
Practical assistance	74	(828)
Keeping up with developments	70	(1639)

In order further to explore the particular satisfactions obtained from membership, the respondents were asked the following question: "If you had to drop your membership in the AEA, what features do you think you would miss most?" The respondents were also asked to check no more than two of the features listed in Table 52. The great majority of the respondents mentioned Adult Leadership, while not more than 28 per cent mentioned any one of the other features. This conforms with the fact that a majority of the membership mentioned "keeping up with developments in the field," when asked about their personal satisfaction. Since Adult Leadership is especially adapted to this need, dealing as it does with a variety of topics related to adult education, and since the great majority of the members have no other contact with their organization, it is not difficult to understand why the magazine is so widely valued by the members.

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* Those who did not answer the question concerning interest and those who did not check one of the personal satisfactions listed are excluded from this table.

Table 52: Features Which the Respondents Would Miss Most

Features	
The annual meeting	5%
Membership in a like-minded group	18
The general program and symbolic value of the AEA	28
Adult Education	23
Adult Leadership	74
Other features	4
"None," no answer, don't know	4
	156%*
Base of %	(2000)

If, as we have said, practical assistance and information about the field can both be gained through AEA's publications, and particularly Adult Leadership, without further contact with the AEA, we would expect that those respondents who specially value the publications are less often interested in the AEA "as an organization." This is shown to be the case in Table 53, which presents the proportion of interested respondents among those who value the different features. Those who mention the magazines tend to be least interested, while those who value the annual meetings, like-mindedness, and the symbolic function of the AEA tend to be most interested. Furthermore, those who say they would miss Adult Leadership if they had to drop their membership are less interested than those who mention Adult Education. This points once again to the fact that the greatest portion of the membership are concerned with "keeping up with developments in the field," a need which may be fulfilled for the majority by Adult Leadership and special publications without any further connection with the AEA. In short, Adult Leadership affords the opportunity for many to keep up with developments in adult education without having to "keep up" with the AEA.

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*Exceeds 100% because the respondents indicated more than one feature.

Table 53: Interest in the AEA by Features Which the Respondents Would Miss Most*

Features	% Interested	Base of %
The annual meeting	92%	(92)
Membership in a like-minded group	85	(364)
The general program and symbolic value of the AEA	82	(549)
Adult Education	74	(448)
Adult Leadership	65	(1458)

Personal Satisfactions and Areas of Interest in Adult Education. As might be expected from various facts already presented, those in the different areas of interest in adult education are also characterized by different personal satisfactions obtained from membership. Table 54 employs the typology of personal satisfactions described in the preceding chapter. The reader will recall that the specific satisfactions were combined and labeled as follows:

Practical assistance or keeping up with developments -- Practical
Social movement or profession -- Broad
Personal association -- Sociable

Table 54 brings out the differences among the various areas of interest with respect to types of satisfaction. Those concerned with "education for special roles and interests" and those interested in "social and interpersonal education," the two areas of "informal" adult education,

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* Those who did answer the question concerning interest and those who did not indicate one of the features listed are excluded from this table.

Table 54: Type of Personal Satisfaction by the Summarized Areas of Interest in Adult Education*

Type of personal satisfaction	Summarized Areas of Interest					
	Education for special roles	Social and interpersonal	Work-related	Liberal	Broad and comprehensive	Remedial
Practical only	46%	44%	39%	31%	30%	31%
Practical and Broad	26	28	24	27	23	19
Practical and Sociable	7	7	9	13	10	11
Practical, Broad and Sociable	14	14	19	18	25	25
Broad or Sociable, but not both	5	6	7	9	12	8
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(834)**	(1188)	(745)	(520)	(636)	(127)

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* Those who did not answer the question concerning either personal satisfaction or area of interest are excluded from this table.

** Bases add to more than 2000 because the respondents indicated more than one area of interest.

are similar with respect to the proportions mentioning each of the types of personal satisfaction. Also, persons in both areas tend to be more concerned with solely practical satisfactions. Those in the other areas of education, on the other hand, are less concerned with purely practical satisfactions and more so with a combination of all three types. It will be recalled from the previous chapter that the areas showing least interest but most overall satisfaction are precisely those areas which are here characterized by solely practical satisfactions. Since we have also seen that high interest and low satisfaction are found among those who are more involved in the AEA, this suggests that those who value only practical satisfactions are less likely to participate in the organization. In order to explore this possibility, we will turn now to the different types of personal satisfactions obtained by members at different levels of involvement.

Personal Satisfactions and Levels of Involvement in the AEA. Personal satisfactions vary considerably with different levels of involvement in the AEA. It may be seen in Table 55 that the proportion of respondents checking only practical satisfactions increases as the level of involvement decreases. That is, the lower the level of involvement, the greater the likelihood of mentioning only "practical assistance" or "keeping up with developments." More than half of those respondents who have never attended a conference checked only practical satisfactions compared with 2 per cent of the Executive Committee, 7 per cent of the delegates, and 13 per cent of the other committee members. On the other hand, 64 per cent of the Executive Committee checked all three types of personal satisfactions, compared with less than 10 per cent of those respondents who have never attended a conference. Obviously, the higher levels of

Table 55: Typology of Personal Satisfactions by Level of Involvement in the AEA*

	Practical only	Practical and Broad or Practical and Sociable	Practical, Broad and Sociable	Other combinations	Total	Base of %
Executive Committee	2%	24%	64%	10%	100%	(50)
Delegate Assembly	7% >8%	32% >32%	50% >49%	11% >11%	100%	(157)
Other committees	13%	36%	38%	13%	100%	(78)
No position in AEA but attended conference						
Professional or Contributing member	19%	40%	29%	12%	100%	(119)
General member (both magazines)	20% >24%	40% >39%	28% >23%	12% >14%	100%	(67)
General member (*Adult Leadership* only)	29%	39%	15%	17%	100%	(136)
No position in AEA and never attended conference						
Professional or Contributing member	53%	33%	9%	5%	100%	(304)
General member (both magazines)	50% >53%	32% >33%	10% >7%	8% >7%	100%	(133)
General member (*Adult Leadership* only)	54%	33%	6%	7%	100%	(870)

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*Those who did not answer the question concerning personal satisfactions are excluded from this table.

involvement obtain satisfaction from a wider array of concerns than do the lower levels. This suggests the existence of a "dedicated core" of members concerned with long-range as well as short-range goals, while the majority remain interested in practical help and news of the field rather than broader concerns. This may be partly due to the fact that the higher levels already possess greater competence in adult education techniques than the rank and file.

The foregoing discussion suggests certain guides for policy formation. The AEA should continue to devote itself to the broad, long-range goals of professionalization in order to satisfy its more active members. Despite the fact that the majority of the membership want only practical assistance and information about the field, the dedicated minority who sustain the organization with their active interest are also looking toward the AEA's broader goals.[2]

B. Images of the AEA

Another way to determine the respondents' specific assessments of the AEA is to study their images of the organization's overall character. In order to uncover these a list of eight statements applicable to many organizations was supplied and the respondents were asked to indicate how appropriate each statement was as a description of the AEA. Table 56 presents those statements and their degree of appropriateness, excluding those respondents who did not answer or were "not familiar enough to say" and who therefore may be less qualified to judge the organization. These unfamiliar responses will be treated subsequently. At present it should be noted that the image which received the greatest

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[2] The problems attending the promotion of professionalization and a social movement, and the various meanings of these terms, are discussed in Chapters X and XI, respectively.

Table 56: The Appropriateness of Various Descriptions of the AEA*

	Appropriateness				
	Very	Somewhat	Not	Total	Base of %
An organization with valuable goals.	76%	22%	2%	100%	(1663)
An organization which asks little from its members other than dues.	29	48	23	100%	(1460)
An organization which has proved effective in representing its members' views to important people and organizations outside it.	27	51	22	100%	(932)
An organization with clear and attainable goals.	25	61	14	100%	(1421)
An organization whose official pronouncements and decisions reflect the wishes of the great majority of its members.	25	52	23	100%	(870)
An organization which is making real progress toward its goals.	22	68	10	100%	(1211)
An organization which does much for its members in addition to sending them a magazine.	22	51	27	100%	(1267)
An organization which successfully harmonizes the divergent views and interests of its members.	21	55	24	100%	(1114)

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[*] Those who did not answer as to appropriateness are excluded from this table.

degree of assent concerned the AEA as "an organization with valuable goals." Three-fourths of the respondents answering with some degree of appropriateness felt that this image was "very appropriate." Thus, it becomes all the more interesting to observe that much smaller proportions believed that the AEA "is making real progress toward its goals" (22 per cent) and felt that it could be very appropriately described as "an organization with clear and attainable goals" (25 per cent). These responses denote a large measure of devotion to the goals of the organization, but a relatively small measure of comprehension of, or confidence in, the inherent attainability of them or the organization's progress toward them.

Further, not even those respondents who felt that the AEA's goals were both valuable and clear and attainable thought that the organization was making real progress toward them. Among those who felt that "valuable goals" was a very appropriate description, only 33 per cent felt the same way about their clarity and attainability. And among those who felt that both images were very appropriate, 59 per cent believed that "real progress toward goals" was a very appropriate statement. This latter group represents only 8 per cent of the entire sample. These small percentages bespeak a somewhat restricted belief in the organization's progress toward its goals, even when the respondents feel that the goals are clear and attainable. The specific goals which the respondents envisage for the AEA will be discussed in some detail in Chapter XIII.

It should also be noted in Table 57 that one of the descriptions is a rather unfavorable one, namely, "an organization which asks little from its members other than dues." Yet 29 per cent of those responding to this statement felt that this image of the AEA was "very appropriate."

Further, only 22 per cent averred that the AEA could be very appropriately described as doing "much for its members in addition to sending them a magazine." These responses undoubtedly reflect the existence of a majority of the membership which views the AEA as essentially the publisher of a magazine.

Since the images of the AEA concerning its functions of internal and external representation of the members' wishes, views, and interests will be treated in detail in a subsequent chapter dealing with democracy in the AEA, we will here only point out that the images of the organization as "reflecting the wishes of the great majority of its members," "representing its members' views to important people and organizations outside it," and "successfully harmonizing the divergent views and interests of its members," were each deemed very appropriate by only about a fourth of the respondents. We will now turn to a consideration of the extent to which the respondents' evaluation of the AEA conforms to a more or less ideal image of a voluntary association. This discussion again hinges on those descriptions of the AEA presented in Table 56. As mentioned earlier, these descriptions could be applied to many organizations and are therefore somewhat independent of the AEA's special role as an organization of adult educators. Hence, any organization which could be favorably described according to all of these images would approach an ideal of perfection in the eyes of its members.

In order to measure the favorableness of the overall image held by the respondents, an index was formed which reflects the responses to all the statements about the AEA except "an organization which asks little from its members other than dues" and "an organization which does much for its members in addition to sending them a magazine."[3] The distribution of respondents according to this index is found in Table 57. Here it is apparent that the respondents were more likely to hold a favorable image than an unfavorable one. More than half of the respondents revealed some degree of favorableness (that is, offered more "very appropriate" than "not appropriate" responses), while less than one-sixth were unfavorable.

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[3] This index was formed by counting the number of "very appropriate" and

Table 57: Favorableness of the Image of the AEA

Unfavorable	16%
Neutral (the same number of favorable and unfavorable responses)	29
Slightly favorable	25
Moderately favorable	13
Very favorable	17
	100%
Base of %	(2000)

The importance of a favorable image of the AEA for overall satisfaction with the organization's program and activities is shown in Table 58. The favorableness of the image, or degree to which the respondent's image of the AEA approximates an ideal picture, is highly related to overall satisfaction. This suggests that the appropriateness of the various descriptions of the AEA plays an important role in the members' feeling A is a worthwhile enterprise. Further, it is suggestive of a

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3 (Continued)
"not appropriate" responses and determining the excess of one type of response over the other. If the number of "not appropriate" responses exceeded the number of "very appropriate" responses by three or more, the respondent was classified as very unfavorable; and if the former exceeded the latter by one or two responses, the respondent was classified as somewhat unfavorable. On the other hand, if the number of "very appropriate" responses exceeded the number of "not appropriate" responses by only one, the respondent was classified as slightly favorable; if by two responses, moderately favorable; and if by three or more responses, those very favorable. Those who checked "not familiar" on all six statements, who did not answer any of the statements, and those who gave the same number of "very appropriate" as "not appropriate" responses were classified as neutral.

need on the part of the leadership to enhance those images of the AEA which show the least affirmation.

Table 58: Overall Satisfaction by Favorableness of the Image of AEA*

	% Satisfied	Base of %
Unfavorable	10%	(197)
Neutral	25%	(178)
Slightly favorable	40%	(239)
Moderately favorable	52%	(136)
Very favorable	68%	(213)

As noted earlier, it was possible for the respondents to check "not familiar enough with the AEA to say" in response to each statement instead of indicating some degree of appropriateness. Since Table 56 represents only those respondents who did answer the statements as to appropriateness and because the statements varied in the proportion as to who took the option of pleading unfamiliarity, it is worth noting which statements were more likely to elicit this response. Table 59 lists the statements in order of decreasing familiarity, with those who failed to answer each description included with those who checked "not familiar enough to say."

All the statements concerning goals elicited a smaller proportion of unfamiliar responses or no answers than any one of the three statements concerning internal and external representation of the members' interests. Indeed, more than half of the respondents were not sufficiently familiar with the AEA to express any opinion on two of these latter statements. Since these statements are more "operational" than the others, knowledge concerning them is undoubtedly related to active participation in the organization. In general, the respondents were more likely to be familiar with the less concrete images, i.e., those

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* Those who did not answer the question concerning satisfaction are excluded from this table.

Table 59: Per Cent of Unfamiliar Responses Concerning the Various Descriptions of the AEA

	Not familiar enough to say, or no answer*
An organization with valuable goals.	17%
An organization which asks little from its members other than dues.	27%
An organization with clear and attainable goals.	29%
An organization which does much for its members in addition to sending them a magazine.	33%
An organization which is making real progress toward its goals.	40%
An organization which successfully harmonizes the divergent views and interests of its members	44%
An organization which has proved effective in representing its members' views to important people and organizations outside it.	53%
An organization whose official pronouncements and decisions reflect the wishes of the great majority of its members.	57%

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[*] The base for each per cent is 2000.

concerning goals, which are perhaps more dependent upon loyalty than real knowledge.

Among the three statements concerning goals, the respondents were least likely to be familiar with the organization's progress and most likely to be familiar with the value of its goals, with clarity and attainability of goals falling midway between these. This raises the following question: If the membership is so strikingly unfamiliar with the AEA's activities with respect to the achievement of goals, and yet values the goals so highly, why do the members belong to the organization at all? One answer is that the "value" of the AEA's goals is simply an unquestioned assumption. It is probable that were the members of the AEA asked about the value of the goals of the American Red Cross, the Boy Scouts, or the National Conference on Social Welfare they would reply with an equal measure of affirmation, even though they may know little about these organizations and may never have been members. Therefore, the "value" of the goals may not be the force which holds the members in the organization. Other features, such as the personal satisfactions discussed above, may be of greater importance. This further suggests that the leadership of the AEA must not be content simply to voice the "value" of its goals, since this is generally accepted, but should communicate concrete goals to its members as well as familiarizing them with the means by which the AEA is trying to achieve these goals and the measure of their success.

The AEA's Achievement of Specific Goals Most Important to the Members.

Because of the rather limited conviction concerning the AEA's progress toward its goals noted above and the possible effect of this belief on the members' general attitudes toward their organization, it is important to examine this opinion in greater detail. The respondents were provided with a list of eleven major purposes which a national organization in adult education might be expected to pursue and were then asked, "Which three of (these) purposes do you feel are the most important at the present time?" They were then instructed to check those purposes which they felt to be most successfully fulfilled by the AEA. Because the particular purposes and their priorities will be discussed at some length in Chapter XIII, we are here concerned only with the number of important purposes which were also considered to be the most successful. This provides us with a measure of the extent to which the respondents feel that the goals they emphasize for a national organization in adult education are indeed being fulfilled. In brief, it gives us an index of perceived organizational achievement; Table 60 shows the distribution of respondents according to this index. As many as 49% of the respondents who indicated the goals they believed to be most important either could not or would not specify whether these goals were being achieved. This reflects the pervasive unfamiliarity with the AEA's progress toward its goals noted previously. Further, 11 per cent of those mentioning the AEA's most important purposes felt that none of these purposes were among those considered most successful. A third of the respondents felt that either one or two purposes were successful, and only a relatively insignificant minority felt that all three goals were successful. Therefore, we are confronted once again with the rather limited conviction that the AEA is making progress toward certain goals.

The relationship between the respondents' perception of the AEA's achievement of those purposes considered crucial and their satisfaction with the organization is a particularly strong one, as shown in Table 61.

Table 60: The Respondents' Perception of the AEA's Achievement of Important Goals*

Number of important purposes seen as most successful	
None	11%
One	18
Two	14
Three	8
"Can't say" which purposes are most successful, or no answer regarding most successful	49
	100%
Base of %	(1937)

Table 61: Overall Satisfaction with the AEA by the Perceived Achievement of Goals**

Number of important purposes seen as most successful	% Satisfied	Base of %
None	19%	(201)
One	32%	(353)
Two	51%	(266)
All three	64%	(143)

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* Those who did not answer the question concerning the three most important purposes for the AEA are excluded from this table.

** Those who did not indicate the success of important purposes and those who did not answer the question concerning satisfaction are excluded from this table.

It should be noted that this table excludes those who failed to indicate the success of the purposes which they envisaged as most important. This confines our attention to those respondents who are more "familiar" with the AEA, at least sufficiently so to pass judgement on the achievement of goals. Within this group overall satisfaction is highly related to the perception of goal-attainment. Although these goals will be discussed in Chapter XIII, it should be stressed here that their achievement is a crucial factor in the members' evaluation of their organization. This further suggests that the AEA should restrict its greatest efforts to those few goals which are given top priority by the members instead of attempting to achieve a variety of goals which attract more limited attention. The latter approach might reduce only the probability of success of any particular goal, thereby affecting the members' overall evaluation of the enterprise.

Thus far we have indicated the importance of two factors in maintaining membership satisfaction with the organization, namely, a favorable image of the AEA and a belief that the AEA is achieving the specific goals which the members have set for it. That these two factors are independently related to overall satisfaction is shown in Table 12. If we read across the rows of this table it is clear that regardless of the number of important goals seen to be most successful, the degree of overall satisfaction increases with the favorableness of the image. Likewise, reading down the columns we see that satisfaction increases with the number of goals seen to be successful regardless of the favorableness of the image. Therefore both factors, one concerning the ideal picture of a national organization and the other concerning the AEA's achievement of specific goals stressed by the members, are related to overall satisfaction.

Table 62: Overall Satisfaction by the Perceived Achievement of Goals and Favorableness of the Image of the AEA*

Number of important purposes seen as most successful	Favorableness of the Image: Unfavorable	Neutral	Slightly favorable	Moderately favorable	Very favorable
None	6% (77)	11% (35)	26% (47)	32% (22)	50% (20)
One	5% (76)	22% (82)	39% (88)	52% (46)	54% (61)
Two	25% (32)	36% (45)	41% (69)	59% (41)	75% (79)
All three	25% (12)	44% (16)	66% (35)	59% (27)	81% (53)

How to read this table: Each percentage indicates the per cent of individuals at the labeled combination of favorableness of image and number of important purposes seen as most successful who said that they were "satisfied" with the organization. Thus the upper left percentage reports that among members who believed that none of the important goals are being achieved and who held an unfavorable image of the AEA, 6% were satisfied with the organization.

The Importance of a General Adult Education Association for the Development of Adult Education. In the preceding discussion we have considered the members' evaluations of the AEA as an organization which serves their personal interests without taking into account their estimate of the AEA's more general value for adult education in this country. In order to see whether the members' attitudes toward the organization also are influenced by their belief in the AEA's importance to the field of adult education, the following question was asked: "Do you believe it would make much difference to the development of adult education in this country if there were no general adult education association such as the AEA?" Table 63 shows that almost all the respondents felt that the absence of such an organization would make at least some difference, and 46 per cent believed it would make a great deal of difference. Furthermore, relatively little difference in this respect is found among those with differing types of position in the field and areas of interest. This is shown in Tables 5 and 6 in Appendix C.

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* Those who did not answer the questions concerning either important purposes seen as most successful or overall satisfaction are excluded from this table.

Table 63: The Difference That It Would Make to Adult Education If There Were No Such Organization as the AEA

It would make a great deal of difference	46%
It would make some difference	48
It would make little or no difference	4
No answer or "don't know"	2
	100%
	(2000)

However, variations of some interest are found among those of varying levels of involvement in the AEA, shown in Table 7 of Appendix C. Forty-five per cent of those who have never attended a conference believed the AEA's absence would make "a great deal of difference," as did 48 per cent of the conference-goers and 44 per cent of those who have served on special committees. It is worthy of note, however, that the top-most levels of involvement are especially prone to give this response, with 60 per cent of the Delegate Assembly and 58 per cent of the Executive Committee members claiming most frequently the importance of having an organization like the AEA. This is an important observation because as shown earlier the Executive Committee members are least satisfied with the organization. That they most often say it would make "a great deal of difference" if there were no organization such as the AEA suggests their commitment to the organization in spite of certain misgivings about its current program and activities. That these attitudes of dissatisfaction and commitment to the organization's further existence are not necessarily incompatible, at least among the more active members, is indicated by the following comment of one of the interviewees:

> It seems to me that the AEA has shown the importance of having an organization of adult educators which can speak with something like a national voice, but it has shown this importance because of its failure to do this. By coming close to fulfilling this function, however, it has shown how important it would be.

Thus, the very attempt to achieve certain difficult goals may have enhanced commitment to these goals, especially among those members who have been highly active. And since a national organization is viewed as the only instrument for attaining such goals, the AEA's importance is given continued emphasis despite its relative shortcomings.

While the foregoing characteristics of type of position, area of interest and level of involvement do not sharply distinguish the respondents with respect to their belief in the importance of such an organization, this attitude does vary greatly with the type of personal satisfactions obtained from membership. As shown in Table 64, those who obtain the widest array of satisfactions are most likely to say that such an organization is of the greatest importance. Among those who mention practical satisfactions and one other type of satisfactions, 52 per cent say "a great deal of difference," and among those who mention only practical satisfactions, 39 per cent do so. Finally, those least likely to give this response are found among persons who mentioned all other satisfactions exclusive of practical satisfactions. This indicates that those who enjoy the greatest range of personal satisfactions are most likely to consider a generalized adult education association indispensable to the field. Moreover, it shows that the large proportion of members who derive gratification solely from practical help or news of the field, presumably those who have joined principally for the publications, are considerably less likely to feel that the AEA is highly indispensable. This underscores our earlier remarks concerning the necessity of continuing to pay close attention to the interests of that minority which derives a variety of satisfactions from membership. These are the members who view an organization such as the AEA as indispensable to adult education and who should therefore be asked for the greatest support. Such support may be in terms of either financial help or the investment of time and energy.

Table 64: Proportion Indicating That Such an Organization Makes a Great Deal of Difference by Type of Personal Satisfactions*

Type of personal satisfaction	% "Great deal of difference"	Base of %
Broad, Practical and Sociable	66%	(307)
Practical and either Broad or Sociable, but not both	52%	(647)
Practical only	39%	(778)
Other combinations	34%	(161)

That the dimension of personal satisfactions is more highly related to a belief in the importance of a national association than the factors of position and interests in adult education suggests that the breadth of personal satisfactions is a more important factor in this belief than the members' "location" in the field. Moreover, since we have already seen that conference attendance varies with type of position and area of interest in adult education, it seems likely that there is a reservoir of commitment among certain persons in almost all positions and interest areas who enjoy the widest range of personal satisfactions but who are not active in the organization. These members may be delineated as the inactive, committed group. In short, participation cannot be taken as a completely accurate indicator of commitment to the organization's further existence. Many of those who have never attended a conference (45 per cent to be exact) feel that it would make a "great deal of difference" if there were no such organization as the AEA. However, as pointed out earlier, it might be extremely difficult to translate this belief into active participation in the AEA among those members whose job either does not permit or does not encourage such participation, especially if their personal satisfactions from membership are such that they may be obtained through the publications *without* the necessity of participation.

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* Those who did not answer the question concerning the difference that such an organization makes to adult education or the question about personal satisfactions are excluded from this table.

It has been suggested that overall satisfaction and interest in the AEA may be related to a belief in the AEA's importance to adult education. Tables 65 and 66 show that this is indeed the case. It appears from these tables that the members' estimate of the AEA's importance to the field of adult education plays a role in their overall satisfaction and interest.[4] This suggests that the members do not evaluate the organization solely in terms of its personal contributions but that their attitudes are also related to their belief in the AEA's importance to the field at large.

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[4] Of course, it is also possible that interest and overall satisfaction influence the members' belief that such an organization is highly important to adult education. These factors are probably interdependent.

Table 65: Overall Satisfaction by the Difference the AEA's Absence Would Make to Adult Education*

	% Satisfied	Base of %
A great deal of difference	48%	(866)
Some difference	30%	(871)
Little or no difference	8%	(75)

Table 66: Interest in the AEA by the Difference the AEA's Absence Would Make to Adult Education**

	% Interested	Base of %
A great deal of difference	80%	(919)
Some difference	58%	(949)
Little or no difference	31%	(84)

Summary. In the present chapter we have studied the members' specific satisfactions, images, and evaluation regarding the AEA. It was shown that the more active members obtain different personal satisfactions from the majority, the former stressing personal associations and the latter practical assistance. Both the active and inactive members are most frequently concerned with obtaining information about the field, although it is likely that the conference-goers rely more often on personal contacts for this feature while the inactive members more often depend on the magazines. It was also noted that the majority of the respondents said that they would miss Adult Leadership most if they had to drop their membership. This indicates that most view the organization essentially as the publisher of a magazine. Moreover, those who would miss either of the magazines most if they had to drop their membership are least interested in the organization while those who place special value on the annual meetings are most interested.

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* Those who did not answer the question concerning either satisfaction or the difference the AEA's absence would make are excluded from this table.

** Those who did not answer the question concerning either interest or the difference the AEA's absence would make are excluded from this table.

Particularly important is the fact that the more involved members are more inclined to obtain a variety of personal satisfactions while the less involved emphasize the single type of "practical satisfactions." In line with this observation it was also shown that solely practical satisfactions are also more often enjoyed by persons interested in informal areas of adult education, namely, "social and interpersonal education" and "education for special roles and interests."

A study of the images of the AEA reflected the members' view of the organization as primarily the publisher of a magazine and revealed that a majority are unfamiliar with the more specific operational aspects of the AEA. Further, the respondents did not show an outstanding degree of faith in the AEA's progress toward its goals, and half of them could not even say whether the specific goals which they considered uppermost for the AEA were in fact being achieved. However, it was pointed out that by and large the members' image of the AEA was a favorable one and that most at least agreed that the AEA has valuable goals.

Having a favorable image of the AEA and viewing it as successfully pursuing important goals were found to be strongly related to overall satisfaction. This suggests the importance of trying to achieve a limited number of goals and of enhancing those images of the organization concerning which the respondents were most skeptical.

In a final section we indicated that the members' belief in the indispensability of a national organization such as the AEA does not vary much with the type of position and area of interest in the field. However, those who enjoy a wide range of personal satisfactions were found more often to believe in the importance of having an organization such as the AEA. This suggests the existence of a certain amount of commitment to the AEA which is hindered from being translated into active participation by dint of the employment situation of the members, a point which was discussed in the previous chapter. Moreover, members who are able to meet their specific needs and interests through the publications rather than through active participation may feel less motivated to become active. Finally, it was shown that the members' overall satisfaction and interest are related to a belief in the AEA's indispensability for adult education.

Chapter VII

FORMER AND POTENTIAL MEMBERS*

The membership of the AEA is not static, but shows a considerable turnover from year to year. For example, during 1958 forty-two per cent of the general members and thirty-one per cent of the professional and contributing members did not renew by the third and final notice that their memberships were about to lapse.[1] During this same year 889 new general members and 396 professional and contributing members joined.[2] In such a situation, it is not sufficient merely to learn who the members are and what they think of their organization. It also becomes important to discover something about those persons in the field who are not members, what they think of the AEA, and why they are not now members. For this reason questionnaires were sent to a sample of former AEA members and several samples of adult educators who had never been members of the AEA. This chapter presents the results of these questionnaires.[3]

The Former Members

It would appear that a large number of adult educators have at one time or another held memberships in the AEA. A file of former members at the AEA headquarters, which extends back only to March of 1955, has been estimated to contain upwards of 10,[illegible]0 names, thus making it likely that even though the AEA has existed less than a decade there are at least twice as many people who have left the AEA as do belong to it now. Thus these former members represent both a considerable loss to the AEA, at least in numbers, and at the same time a possible source of many new members if they could be attracted back into the AEA. Consequently, we will attempt to learn who these former members are, how they differ from the individuals who are currently in the AEA, what occasioned these former members to leave the AEA, and what, if anything, might be done to encourage them to rejoin.

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*This chapter was written by William L. Nicholls II.

[1] These figures may indicate more turnover than actually exists, since it is apparently a frequent pattern for individuals to let their membership lapse a month or two and then rejoin.

[2] The amount of turnover appears to be quite high, at least in comparison with the Canadian Association for Adult Education. The Director of this Canadian counterpart of the AEA estimates that turnover in individual memberships in the Canadian Association for Adult Education is approximately ten per cent.

[3] See Appendix A for a detailed discussion of these questionnaires and the samples to which they were mailed.

Those Who Have Left the Field. It appears that at least to some extent the turnover of membership in the AEA may result from turnover in the field of adult education. A change in position frequently accompanies a major change of residence, and as reported in Chapter IV, AEA members appear to be highly mobile geographically. It is also commonly known that many individuals enter adult education on a part-time basis for only a short period, especially in the public schools and universities, to teach a course or two and then drop out. Those with full-time positions whose responsibilities include some adult education functions, may find their responsibilities changed after a time; and those with a volunteer interest in adult education may at a later time find other volunteer or leisure time activities more interesting. It is therefore not surprising to learn that many former AEA members no longer have any connection with adult education. In response to the question, "Are you currently engaged in any activities in the field of adult education?" nearly a third, thirty-two per cent, of the former members who answered the questionnaire said "No."[4] Some of these individuals may never have had any official connection with adult education. However, because previous studies of the AEA's membership did not report any substantial number of members unconnected with adult education, it seems likely that most of those who said "no" had been in some phase of the field but have left it.

In order to encourage as many former members who were not in the field to reply to the questionnaire as possible, they were asked to supply only limited information about themselves. Consequently little is known about their former positions and interests in adult education, or their current activities. However, in comparison with those former members who have remained in adult education, a larger proportion are women and a larger proportion do not hold degrees at the master's level or higher. This suggests that their former interests in adult education were more commonly those of a volunteer or part-time worker than of a full-time worker or administrator.

Those Who Remained in the Field. The former members who replied that they were currently engaged in activities in the field of adult education were asked the same question about these activities as the members were about their current activities. It is therefore possible to compare the former and current members in several ways. The tables from which these comparisons were made are found in Appendix C, and only the general conclusions will be given here.[5]

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[4] For a variety of reasons this should not be taken to mean that a third of all former members have left the field. Ex-members who had changed their addresses, and presumably their jobs also, were less likely to receive their questionnaire and may have been less interested in returning it because they had severed connections with adult education. For these reasons it seems possible that the proportion of all former members no longer in adult education may actually be somewhat higher.

1. Former members less frequently hold paid positions in adult education than current members, and those who do hold paid positions less frequently hold full-time positions concerned entirely with adult education.

2. Former members less commonly reported holding administrative positions in adult education than current members.

3. Fewer former than current members indicated that they belonged to other organizations in adult education. This is found to be the case for local and city adult education councils, state and regional councils, and also for other national organizations concerned with adult education.

4. Former members less frequently reported thinking of themselves as adult educators than current members, and they less frequently expressed an interest in providing broad and comprehensive adult education.

5. Former members less often reported holding doctor's degrees or master's degrees than did current members. However, better than an eighth of the former members indicated that they held a degree in divinity or theology, while such a degree is held by only 0.2 per cent of the current members. Educationally, the former members appear to be a more heterogeneous group than the members.

6. In comparison with the current members, the former members disproportionately carry out their adult education activities in churches and religious organizations, and less commonly perform their adult education functions through the public schools, universities, and libraries.

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[5] Cf. Table 8 in Appendix C.

Several of the above comparisons lead to the same conclusion, that the former members are less involved in adult education than the current members. This information is, of course, not in itself sufficient to determine whether the former members were ever as involved in adult education as the current members. That fewer of them than current members held doctorates and master's degrees, however, suggests that even in the past former members did not hold those top administrative positions in adult education in proportion to the others, which generally require such degrees. Nevertheless, it also seems likely that some of the former members may have become less involved in adult education after they left the AEA.

As the previous chapters have shown, involvement in adult education as measured by the type of position held, the tendency to think of oneself as an adult educator, an interest in providing broad, comprehensive adult education, membership in other adult education organizations, etc., appears to be related among the members to interest and active participation in the AEA. For this reason, the lesser involvement in adult education of the former members suggests that as a group they are not necessarily prime candidates for membership in the AEA. However, about a fourth of these former members who are still in the field would seem to be highly involved in adult education, and perhaps would be valuable members if they could be encouraged to rejoin.

The Former Member's Image of the AEA. By and large the former members who are still in the field of adult education do not appear to have an unfavorable image of the AEA.[6] Forty-one per cent replied that they felt such an organization was essential to the field and another thirty-nine per cent felt it was desirable, although not essential, to have such an organization. Only nine per cent believe it is unnecessary to have a generalized national organization in adult education.[7]

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[6] Former members who are not in adult education were not asked for their opinions of the AEA.

When asked to comment on the appropriateness of a set of more specific descriptions of the AEA, many of the former members either replied that they were not familiar enough with the organization to say or else did not answer at all. This lack of familiarity with the AEA probably is not only the result of forgetting what was once known, but also indicates the limited contact most former members had with the AEA. Ninety per cent of the former members who replied to the questionnaire had held only general membership as opposed to 70 per cent of the members who returned questionnaires. Furthermore, the former members had generally not been long term members of the AEA. More than half of those replying indicated that they had been members for only one or two years, and better than two-thirds had not belonged more than three years.

The former members who were familiar enough with the AEA to react to more specific questions about the AEA generally indicated that they held an image of it which was at least as favorable as that held by the members and in some cases was more favorable. For example, 37 per cent of the former members who commented on the description of the AEA as "an organization which is making real progress toward its goals" felt this was a very appropriate description, while such a view was taken by only 22 per cent of the members who answered. The former members also, at least as frequently as the members, agreed that the following descriptions were very appropriate for the AEA: An organization which successfully harmonizes the divergent views and interests of its members; An organization with valuable goals; An organization with clear and attainable goals;

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[7] Eleven per cent of the former members did not answer this question.

An organization whose official pronouncements and decisions reflect the wishes of the great majority of its members; and, An organization which has proved effective in representing its members' views to important people and organizations outside it.[8] Although some of the former members who answered these questions feel that these descriptions are not appropriate and many feel they are only somewhat appropriate, the fact that they were no more critical than the members suggests that it was not dissatisfaction with the AEA along these lines which led to the termination of their memberships.

Why the Former Members Left the AEA. Because the former members appear convinced of the desirability of having an organization such as the AEA in their field and because they do not appear any more critical of it than the current members, what, it may be asked, occasioned them to drop their memberships? As one approach to this question the former members who were in adult education were presented with the check list found in Table 66 and asked to indicate how important each of the various factors were in their decision to end their membership in the AEA. Eight per cent of the respondents did not check any of the items as important and only a few bothered to indicate the degree of importance of each factor, most checking only one or two items as very important or somewhat important.

Table 66 again emphasizes that disagreement with the AEA's objectives or operation did not play much of a role in the decision of most of the former members to terminate their memberships. Not only

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[8] Cf. Table 9 of Appendix C for the tables presenting these comparisons.

Table 66. The Degree of Importance Attached to Various Factors in the Decision of the Former Members to Terminate Their Membership in the AEA.*

	Degree of importance			
Possible factor in the decision to leave	Very	Somewhat	Not or no ans.**	Total
a) No real disagreement with the AEA but greater involvement in other interests and activities	57%	17	26	100%
b) Found that other organizations in adult education met my needs more fully	13%	13	74	100%
c) Found the costs of membership too high	11%	19	70	100%
d) Found that the publications of the AEA were not useful	8%	21	71	100%
e) Disappointment with the program and activities of the AEA	6%	11	83	100%
f) Did not like the way the organization was run	2%	3	95	100%
g) Disagreement with the AEA's apparent objectives	1%	5	94	100%
h) A general lessening of interest in the field of adult education	-%	7	93	100%
i) Other	9%	5	86	100%

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* This table includes information only on the 92% of the former member respondents holding positions in adult education who checked at least one of the factors as "very" or "somewhat important." The base for all percentages in this table is 474.

** Because it appeared that the majority of respondents did not utilize the "not important" response and did not check any of the categories for those factors which were not important in their decision to leave the AEA, the "not important" responses have been placed with the no answers in this table.

did items e, f, and g receive very few mentions as important in Table 66, but the only item checked as either very or somewhat important by more than a third of the respondents, item a, contained the clause "no real disagreement with the AEA." Consequently it appears that the former members, by and large, did not leave the AEA with feelings of antagonism toward it.[9]

A general lessening of interest in adult education did not seem to be an important factor in the decision of these former members still in the field to drop their memberships. However, the questions presented in Table 66 were not asked of those former members who are not now engaged in adult education, and among this latter group such a change of interest was more likely to have taken place.

By taking the first four factors in Table 66 together, one may construct an interpretation of the dropping away of the former members which appears to make some sense. To a degree the AEA may be seen as competing in a market situation for the dues and interest of its members. For professional adult educators its competitors would consist of not only other voluntary organizations in adult education, but also other published sources of ideas and techniques for adult education programs. For the volunteers, and the professionals as well, voluntary organizations of all types which AEA's members might be interested in joining may also be seen as competitors. As mentioned in Chapter IV, AEA members typically belong to several such voluntary organizations, and the total costs of the dues from such organizations undoubtedly consume a fair proportion of an adult educator's budget. In this situation, especially with the general increase in organizational dues and magazine subscription rates over the past few years, many people apparently have had to weigh the benefits of AEA membership with the benefits of other memberships and sources of adult education material.

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[9] There appeared to be no difference in this respect between the former members who hold paid positions and volunteers.

Some evidence for this hypothesis is found in the comments the former members gave as "other" reasons for dropping their memberships and in the comments of that small group of former members with whom personal interviews were conducted.

> Your costs were not too high, but my budget had to be trimmed.
>
> - - - - -
>
> The cost of AEA is not too great but I was a member of ten professional organizations and economic conditions forced me to cut down.
>
> - - - - -
>
> I have too many commitments, and I completed a term of office during which I considered /AEA/ membership imperative.
>
> - - - - -
>
> Such reams of material come in here, Adult Leadership didn't register one way or the other. I wasn't reading it enough to get $5.00 worth of good out of it.

This interpretation of the loss of membership would, of course, apply most directly when the members had no other contact with the AEA than as magazine subscribers and were interested in AEA primarily as a source of ideas and techniques in adult education and leadership, and this is apparently the situation which obtained for most of these former members.[10] A few mentioned that if there had been local meetings to attend, their interest might have been sustained. Certainly if these former members felt membership in the AEA was an expression of loyalty to something to which they were deeply committed, many more would have retained membership. But as just one of a number of competing magazines and sources of ideas in adult education and leadership, or as just one of a number of voluntary organizations supporting good causes, membership in the AEA apparently did not always win out. It was not that there was anything which could be pointed to as wrong with the AEA. Rather, it was that membership in it was not felt to be as valuable as membership in other organizations or a subscription to another magazine.

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[10] When the former members were asked to select from a list of features of the AEA those they missed most, only the publications received checks by more than 10 per cent. "The general program and symbolic value of the AEA" and "membership in a like-minded group" received only a relatively few mentions.

Some of the other comments supplied by the former members brought out a related point. Since the content of AEA's publications necessarily had to cover many areas of adult education, relatively little space could be devoted to specific help and information in each area. Consequently those in each area who joined primarily for such specific help and information felt that for the cost of their membership they received relatively little help. For them it would be more economical to obtain materials from sources more directly related to their particular interests, especially since, as was commonly noted, Adult Leadership could usually be found in the library or borrowed from a friend when needed.

Recent changes in Adult Leadership may also have played a role in the decision of some members to end their membership. Among those who terminated their memberships in 1958, 41 per cent checked "found the publications of the AEA were not useful" as important in their decision to drop out. Among those leaving before 1958, only 28 per cent selected this factor as important.

Other comments from the interviews and questionnaires point up the fact that the decision to terminate membership was not always an individual one. As one interviewee noted, he didn't join the AEA but was "joined" by his national office, who paid for such memberships and apparently decided which ones were to be taken out. Numerous other interviewees and respondents noted that they did not pay for their memberships out of their own pockets but had them financed by their employers, although the decision to join had been their own. Consequently if the individual changed to another job in the field, changed his responsibilities for the same employer, or if the employing agency decided not to continue paying for the membership, he was faced with the choice of taking over the cost of membership himself or dropping out, and many noted that they ended their memberships when such situations arose. Although no statistical data are available to indicate how frequently this pattern occurred, it would seem likely to the authors that it was not unusual. Therefore, if it is the case that many memberships are paid for by the employers rather than the individuals themselves, it would seem that directing promotional materials to the employers or the leaders of large adult education agencies might serve as an additional method of recruitment.

What Would Encourage the Former Members to Rejoin? If the former members who replied to the questionnaire can be taken at their word, there is little the AEA could do to encourage most of them to rejoin. When asked "Are there any changes which the AEA could make in its program, activities, or publications which would encourage you to rejoin it?" 47 per cent of the former members gave an unqualified "No." An additional 27 per cent said they were not sure or did not answer, and only 26 per cent said "Yes." The latter group were further asked what changes they would like to see, and most of them were able to suggest change or else they made criticisms of the AEA from which desired changes could be inferred. The suggestions ranged all the way from issuing an official pin so AEA members could identify each other to "taking an unequivocal stand in favor of democracy and intellectualism." There was no single suggestion on which a majority agreed.

The most common suggestion, made by about one-third of those commenting, was to pay more attention to the particular specialty of the respondent. Thus one man was disappointed to find after years of subscribing that not one article had appeared on how to teach algebra and geometry to adult high school students, and another waited in vain for a list of source materials for a course in comparative religion. Others felt that safety education, dance instruction, international policy, etc., should be given more space in the magazines. Needless to say, few agreed as to which particular specialties had been neglected. ✓

It seems possible, although there is little direct evidence to substantiate this hypothesis, that behind the requests for more direct help in each particular area may lie a desire for recognition. As the most general organization in the field of adult education, the AEA necessarily comes to be viewed as a body which can confer some measure of acceptance and status in the field to various sub-groups who may wish to be identified with adult education. One way in which such recognition is granted is through the publications, that is, by allotting space for the discussion of some adult education sub-fields in the magazine and by neglecting others. Thus it may be that some of the requests for more magazine space for particular specialties indicate not a desire for concrete help but rather for recognition of the specialties and the work being done in them.

Another third of those requesting changes in the AEA expressed the more general opinion that the magazines should be more practical, and several felt that the articles should avoid "jargon" and be written in a more simple style. On the other hand, a somewhat smaller proportion felt a more professionalized journal was called for and expressed the opinion that Adult Leadership was "obviously intended only for lay people." There were requests both for more and for less emphasis on group dynamics. About a seventh felt that the dues should be lowered.

It is not surprising that many of the suggestions run counter to each other. The former members appear to be a highly heterogeneous group not only in their adult education interests but also in their educational backgrounds. So far as the AEA is concerned, most appear to be primarily interested in obtaining inexpensive help in some specific area of adult education, and they would like material written in a language and at the level of sophistication which is appropriate for their particular level of training. That the AEA was not able to meet so many different demands for these former members is understandable.

Only a handful of the former members had any suggestions to make regarding AEA's internal organization, aims, or relations to other organizations. However, about an eighth of those commenting suggested that AEA should do a better promotion job for itself or adult education, and approximately a fifth looked for more chance for participation on the local level in laboratories, seminars, local meetings, and regional conferences. Thus one respondent noted:

> I would rejoin if there was a local functioning organization, one which our council could be a part of, or if it sponsored seminars for laymen. I don't feel a part of it if I just pay dues. If I played a role in it, it would be more meaningful, if it were real, not just on paper. I now go to people as individuals for help in adult education activities, but I should go to an organization, and I would if there were a branch in [my area].

Here again, the desire, as perhaps in many cases, was for help with regard to specific problems, but the interest in more local contacts appears to indicate that at least some of these former members have a broad enough concern with adult education to make them possible future recruits if local organizations can be built up to sustain their interest.

Summary. The factors which lie behind the dropping of memberships in the AEA do not appear to be ones which are easily amenable to control by the AEA. Approximately a third of the former members who responded to the questionnaire are no longer in adult education, and presumably are permanently lost to the AEA. Those who remained in the field generally hold positions which do not involve them as fully in adult education as the current members are involved, and probably not much more than a fourth of them are deeply committed to adult education either economically or psychologically. Their contacts with the AEA apparently were limited at the time of membership largely to receiving a magazine, and if they found it provided less practical help than some other source, or if some other voluntary organization attracted their interest, membership in AEA was dropped. In other cases, it appears that something occurred which made it no longer possible for the member's employer to continue paying for the membership. The changes the former members suggested for the AEA seem to be mainly requests for inexpensive assistance in dealing with particular areas of adult education and "practical help" in general, although in some cases these demands may indicate a desire more for recognition than for actual practical assistance. Whether the AEA can succeed in servicing such a large and heterogeneous group to the satisfaction of even the majority, is of course a serious question.

Among the former members, however, there does appear to be a minority with broader interests in adult education and a deeper commitment to it. If opportunities for local participation, which were called for by a few of the former members, were made available, it might be possible to develop such interests further, and as suggested previously, in this way it might be possible to build an interest in and loyalty to the AEA. The only other approach to these former members appears to be to satisfy their desire for practical but inexpensive help. In either case, the fact that the former members agree with the desirability of having such an organization as the AEA and that they are not generally more critical of it as an organization than the members, provides at least some basis for optimism.

Adult Educators Who Have Never Been AEA Members

Because relatively few of the former members appear to be prime prospects for future membership in the AEA, it may be advisable to seek new members among those adult educators who have never joined the AEA. Undoubtedly tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of these "never members," as we shall call them, can be found, although it probably would be unwise to assume that any large proportion of them are sufficiently interested to be attracted to the AEA. However, among these never members there undoubtedly exist many individuals to whom AEA membership would be interesting and valuable, and it therefore is important to learn something about them.

Early in the planning of this study, the authors recognized that the potentially large numbers of never members and the absence of any general directory of adult educators made it impossible to obtain a representative sample of never members with the limited time and money available. However, so little appeared to be known about any groups of never members and their views about the AEA, that it seemed worthwhile to carry out some research with these individuals, even if it was necessary to work with a completely unrepresentative sample. Therefore, the authors set themselves the modest goal of attempting to obtain some information about certain specific groups of never members whose names and addresses could be obtained through readily available sources.

The Samples Selected. Small samples were drawn from each of the following six categories of adult educators: 1) District Agricultural Extension and Home Economics Agents; 2) members of the Adult Services Division of the American Library Association; 3) members of the National Association of Public School Adult Educators; 4) deans and directors of university extension listed in the Directory of Administrative Personnel of the National University Extension Association; 5) other personnel listed in the same directory; and 6) members of state and regional adult education associations.[11] When these samples were cross checked to eliminate duplication and the names of all known current and former members were removed, a total of 1461 individuals remained who were thought likely to be engaged in adult education but who presumably had never joined the AEA. Each was sent a questionnaire, and 549 usable replies were obtained.

It should be emphasized again that these six samples are not intended to be representative of all adult educators who have not joined the AEA, and it is clear the particular samples selected actually are a rather select group of never members. Most of those never members sent questionnaires are affiliated with agencies whose primary goal is educational, rather than with agencies which use adult education to reach some other goal. The inclusion of samples of district agents of Agricultural Extension and National University Extension Association deans and directors tends strongly to bias the group of never members queried toward the inclusion of a disproportion of administrators. And the use of membership lists of other national, regional, and state associations to obtain the names of some of the never members probably has led to a sample of individuals who are especially amenable to supporting organizational activities in the field.

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[11] For more detailed information concerning these samples and the administration of questionnaires to them, see Appendix A.

Comparisons of Never and Current Members. When a total sample of never members is formed by combining the six sub-samples, an aggregate is found which is similar in many ways to the sample of current members. These two samples are identical or very similar in: 1) the per cent who are male; 2) their mean age; 3) the per cent who think of themselves as adult educators; 4) the percentages holding various types of positions in adult education; 5) the per cent claiming membership in state or regional adult education organizations; and 6) the per cent claiming membership in a national organization, other than the AEA, which is concerned with adult education.[12] They differ only slightly in other ways. The total sample of never members contains slightly smaller proportions than the sample of current members of those who: 1) hold doctorate degrees; 2) claim to belong to local or city councils of adult education; and 3) discuss common problems with adult educators outside their own agency at least once a week. On the other hand, the never members more frequently than the current members hold top administrative positions and express an interest in providing broad and comprehensive adult education. Even these differences are not of great magnitude. Thus it appears that it is possible to find adult educators outside the AEA who are very similar to AEA members, not only in certain demographic characteristics but also in those attributes, such as self-perception and type of position, which have been taken as indicators of commitment to adult education.

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[12] Table 10 in Appendix C presents the detailed statistical comparisons which are summarized in these statements.

This, of course, does not imply that all adult educators who have not joined the AEA are similar to AEA members in these respects for, as previously noted, the sample of never members used here consists of a rather select group of adult educators. Nor does it imply that AEA members comparable to the six samples of never members are similar to these. The never members were drawn largely from among those working in institutions in which individuals have generally been found to be more committed economically and psychologically to adult education. When the samples of never members are compared with sub-samples of comparable AEA members, the never members are generally found to be less involved in and less committed economically and psychologically to adult education. For example, 57 per cent of the sample of NAPSAE members who have never joined the AEA think of themselves as adult educators, as opposed to 83 per cent of the NAPSAE members who belong to the AEA.[13] Similarly, 32 per cent of the sample of National University

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[13] Among AEA members affiliated with the public schools who do not belong to the National Association of Public School Adult Educators, 44 per cent think of themselves as adult educators. This suggests that thinking of oneself as an adult educator may be related more to the number of national adult education organizations belonged to than the particular organization to which one belongs.

Extension Association deans and directors who are not AEA members hold this self-image compared to 86 per cent of those National University Extension Association deans and directors who are AEA members. More generally, when the sample of never members is compared with a matched and weighted sample of current members, the never members are found to contain substantially smaller proportions who: 1) think of themselves as adult educators; 2) hold full-time paid positions concerned entirely with adult education; 3) hold top administrative positions; 4) claim to belong to local, state or region, or national adult education organizations; 5) have frequent interagency contacts; and 6) have an interest in providing broad and comprehensive adult education.[14] Thus it would seem that from among the members of the National Association of Public School Adult Educators, the American Library Association's Adult Services Division, the National University Extension Association deans and directors, etc., those who are most involved and committed are most likely already to have joined AEA. Nevertheless, among these same groups of never members there apparently still remains as large a proportion of deeply committed individuals as can be found in the AEA in general. To put the matter metaphorically and loosely, the AEA may already have skimmed off the heavy cream from these groups, but a good amount of light cream appears to be left.

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[14] In order to construct a matched and weighted sample, current members comparable to each of the six sub-samples of never members were located among those who responded to the questionnaire for members. For example, to match the never members who were district agents in Agricultural Extension, all district agents who were members of the AEA and who responded to the members' questionnaire were used. No attempt was made to match these groups in other ways, such as in educational distribution, age, or sex. When a matching group of members was found for each of the six samples of never members, however, it became apparent that the proportions in the six groups of matching members differed considerably from the proportions in the six groups of never members. For example, approximately 25 per cent of the responding never members were district agents of Agricultural Extension but such district agents included only 7 per cent of the matching cases of current members. Consequently, merely adding all the matching cases together and percentaging them would not produce a sample comparable to the percentage total sample of never members. Therefore the matching samples of current members were appropriately weighted so as to "standardize" them in accordance with the proportions in the never member sample.

The detailed comparisons between the never members and the matched and weighted sample of current members will be found in Table 10 of Appendix C.

One additional word of warning should be offered about the foregoing discussion. In concluding that on the basis of their involvement in adult education the particular groups of never members sampled may be good prospects for membership in the AEA, no invidious comparison is implied with other groups who were not studied. Undoubtedly there are many adult educators among those in industry, labor, health and welfare, and other voluntary agencies who are equally committed to adult education and who make equally likely candidates for membership. Whether there are equal proportions of such persons in these other groups is, of course, an empirical question for which there is at present no answer. In any event it would seem unwise to neglect serious consideration of these other groups merely because they were not included for study here.

Knowledge About the AEA. Perhaps the simplest possible explanation of the failure of never members to join the AEA would be that they have never heard of it, and it is therefore best to consider this first. Each of the never members was asked: "Have you ever heard of the Adult Education Association of the U.S.A. or the AEA as it is frequently called?" From the responses tabulated in Table 67 it may be seen that most, although certainly not all, of these never members are aware of the AEA's existence. More than a sixth of the never members, however, claim not to have heard of the AEA, and for them no further explanation of their failure to join seems necessary.

It is perhaps surprising that among the six samples of never members, the sample of National Association of Public School Adult Educators members contains the largest percentage who have never heard of the AEA, for over a fourth of this group appear uninformed about the existence of the AEA. Considering that the National Association of Public School Adult Educators originated within the AEA and that formal ties still exist between the AEA and the National Association of Public School Adult Educators, one would anticipate a much greater familiarity with the AEA among National Association of Public School Adult Educators members.

Before an individual is likely to join an organization, it would seem that he would have to know more about it than the simple fact that it exists. For example, he would probably also have to know what the organization did and what it stood for. Therefore, all those never members who claimed to know that there was an AEA were asked: "How familiar are you with its organization, program, and activities?" Only 7 per cent reported that they were "very familiar" with the AEA in these respects, 51 per cent claimed to know "something about them," and 40 per cent said they knew "little or nothing about them."[15] Thus approximately half of the total sample of never members either had never heard of the AEA at all or claimed to know at most very little about it.[16]

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[15] Two per cent did not answer.

[16] As might be expected, familiarity with the AEA is greater among those who are most involved in adult education occupationally. Sixty-three per cent of the never members who hold full-time positions concerned entirely with adult education claimed to know at least something about the AEA, as compared with 42 per cent of those with part-time positions and 37 per cent of the volunteers.

Table 67: Knowledge of the Existence of AEA Found Among Six Samples of Adult Educators Who Had Never Joined AEA.

	Samples of never members						
Ever heard of AEA	Agri. Ext.	ALA's ASD	NAPSAE	NUEA deans	NUEA other	State & reg. org.	Total
Yes	85%	76%	71%	91%	78%	91%	82%
No	15	21	26	9	21	9	17
No answer	-	3	3	-	1	-	1
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(137)	(97)	(97)	(35)	(83)	(98)	(549)*

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* Two respondents to the never member questionnaire had removed the identifying code from the questionnaire which was used to determine in which sample they had been drawn. Consequently the total column contains two more cases than the sum of six sub-samples.

Even those never members who claimed to know at least "something" about the AEA found it difficult to express an opinion when presented with more specific questions about this organization. For example, only 59 per cent of them, or 28 per cent of the total sample of never members felt they could say whether or not the AEA was an organization with valuable goals. Even smaller percentages could offer a reply to other specific questions about the AEA, such as whether it was making progress towards its goals.[17] Thus it appears that in general relatively few of these never members have much familiarity with the AEA.

Because there exist no comparative data, at least to the author's knowledge, on the familiarity of other populations with national organizations to which they have never belonged, it is difficult to determine whether the situation reported above is unusual. It may be for example that adult educators who do not belong to the AEA are no less familiar with the AEA than teachers of children not in the National Education Association are with it, or than scientists unaffiliated with the American Association for the Advancement of Science are with it. However, whether the AEA is typical in this respect or not, the above figures do suggest that more might be done to acquaint adult educators with the fact of the AEA's existence and with some limited information about it. While such promotion or public relation activities would not insure an increase in membership, they would at least help to establish three conditions without which recruiting those never members seems unlikely.

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[17] The specific questions about the AEA which were asked of the never members are the same ones which were asked of the former members. Cf pages 8 and 9 of this chapter.

Attitudes Towards the AEA. The lack of familiarity of the never members with the AEA may, of course, be viewed in a somewhat optimistic light. Among those who know little or nothing about the AEA, there is no need to overcome unfavorable views about it. Nor does this seem to be much of an obstacle even in the case of those who do claim to know something about the AEA. As was found for the former members, the never members are in general no more critical of the AEA in most respects than are the members.[18] Furthermore, the great majority of the never members do not seem to be opposed in principle to the idea of a generalized organization for all adult education. Twenty-three per cent of the sample indicated that they felt such an organization was essential to the field, 53 per cent said that it was desirable although not essential, and only 18 per cent felt it was unnecessary.[19] Such agreement in principle, however, has already been shown to be even higher among the former members, and therefore it may have little meaning in terms of recruiting and holding members. Nevertheless, it too suggests that the never members who replied to the questionnaire are not particularly antagonistic toward the AEA.

Previous Invitations to Join. More than a third (36 per cent) of the sample of never members report that they had been asked to join the AEA at one time or another.[20] As shown in Table 68, however, the per cent who received such invitations differs from sample to sample. Nearly half of the National University Extension Association deans and directors and the members of state and regional associations claim to have been asked to join, while much smaller proportions of Agricultural Extension district agents and other National University Extension Association personnel report having received an invitation to membership. It appears that typically these invitations were received through the mail, for 64 per cent of those reporting that they had been asked to join indicated that the invitations were of this nature. However, 40 per cent of those who had been approached reported that the invitation came through a friend or acquaintance, and 10 per cent mentioned other channels, mainly through other organizations or through the agency in which they were employed.[21] Thus in the total sample of never members it appears that less than a fifth had received an invitation through personal contact.

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[18] Cf. Table 11 in Appendix C for the detailed tables on which these statements are based.

[19] There were relatively large differences in this respect among the various samples of never members. These are presented in Table 12 in Appendix C.

[20] These percentages probably should not be accepted at face value. The receiving of an invitation to join through the mail is an event which may easily escape notice or rapidly be forgotten.

Why the Never Members Did Not Join. To determine why an individual carries out an act, social scientists generally have found that depth interviews are required, and questionnaires can provide only limited information in this area. To deal with the much more subtle and difficult problem of why a person did not do something, such as not join an organization, questionnaires are even more inadequate. However, in the current study they appeared to be the only economically feasible method, even though little trust can be placed on the results obtained.

In order to make the questionnaire approach less inappropriate, only those never members who claimed to have "seriously considered"

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[21] These percentages total more than 100 per cent because some respondents indicated that they had received invitations in more than one way.

Table 68: The Per cent Who Recall Having Been Asked to Join the AEA in Six Samples of Adult Educators Who Had Never Joined the AEA.

Sample of never members	% asked to join	base of %
Agricultural Extension district agents.	28%	(137)
Members of American Library Association's Adult Services Division	33%	(97)
Members of National Association of Public School Adult Educators	39%	(97)
National University Extension Association deans and directors	49%	(35)
National University Extension Association other personnel	29%	(83)
Members of state and regional adult education organizations	49%	(98)
Total	36%	(549)*

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* Two respondents to the never member questionnaire had removed the identifying code from the questionnaire which was used to determine in which sample they had been drawn. Consequently the total column contains two more cases than the sum of six sub-samples.

joining the AEA, some 29 per cent of the total sample, were asked to respond to a check list of reasons for not joining, and from their responses it at least seems possible to eliminate some reasons why they did not join. For example, none of these never members offered as a reason for not joining disagreement with the aims of the AEA, and only 1 per cent said that they failed to join because they did not like the way the organization was run. Four per cent said they had not joined because they felt the AEA's publications would not be useful, and 9 per cent felt the costs of membership were too high. Thirty per cent, however, felt that other organizations in adult education met their needs more fully, and 47 per cent claimed that other interests and commitments were more important to them. Thus it would seem that the failure of these individuals to join lies not so much with any disagreement with the AEA but rather with the pull of other interests and organizations. In this respect the reasons why the never members have not joined appear very similar to the reasons why the former members left the AEA.[22]

As another approach to understanding why the never members had not joined the AEA and what might bring them into the membership, all were asked if there were any changes the AEA could make in its program, activities, or publications which would encourage them to consider joining. Only 6 per cent replied that there were such changes which they would like to see, and there was practically no agreement on what these should be. An additional 8 per cent said there were no changes the AEA could make which would encourage them to join, but the great majority, 86 per cent, either said they didn't know or else did not answer. This suggests that most of the never members simply don't know enough about the AEA to recommend any changes and once again emphasizes the low level of information held by the never members about the AEA.

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[22] Twenty per cent of the never members wrote in other reasons for not joining. Among these were: 1) the availability of AEA's publications through other means, 2) insufficient familiarity with the AEA to make the decision, 3) not receiving an invitation, and 4) "never getting around to it." These percentages total more than 100 per cent because some respondents checked more than one reason. Eight per cent of those who claimed to have seriously considered joining did not answer the question as to why they did not join. Both the never and former members were also asked what functions they felt were most important for any generalized organization in the field of adult education to carry out. The response to this question, however, will be considered in Chapter XIII.

Summary. In comparison with the former members, the particular sample of never members studied appears to contain a larger proportion of individuals who are committed to adult education occupationally and psychologically. In fact, in these respects, the sample of never members differs only slightly from the sample of current AEA members. Thus to the extent that such commitment makes more likely the support of a generalized national organization in adult education, such as the AEA, these never members appear better prospects for future membership in the AEA than the former members. However, because of the select nature of the sample of never members used, this does not imply that all never members necessarily make better prospects than the former members. It does, however, suggest that there exist at least some groups of adult educators outside the AEA whose commitment to the field is as great as the members.

As would be anticipated, the never members know much less about the AEA than either the former or current members. Even in the rather select group of never members studied here, however, it appears that their knowledge of the AEA is rather minimal, a minority not even being aware of the AEA's existence and only a very few seeming to have any extensive knowledge of the AEA. Therefore, it may be suggested that one step toward the enlisting of these individuals may be a greater effort on the part of the AEA to acquaint them with the fact of the AEA's existence and its goals and activities. Since so few of the never members appear to have any idea of what the AEA is and what it does, the task here does not appear to be one of overcoming negative or hostile attitudes toward the AEA, but rather the simpler job of making the AEA better known to these persons.

Such an information campaign, however, would not be sufficient. As in the case of the former members, the never members appear already committed to other organizations and interests which also require time and money. It therefore seems necessary for the AEA to prove itself at least as worthy of support as these other interests. Just how this is to be done, the never members are apparently unable to say, since few seem to know what the AEA is doing already. Nor does the foregoing analysis appear to offer any concrete clues. In a later chapter, we will see, however, that at least in principle both the former and never members appear to desire almost the same things of a national organization in the field of adult education as do the AEA's current members.

Chapter VIII

DEMOCRACY IN A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION*

There is little doubt that the founders of the AEA intended their new membership organization to be at once highly democratic and extremely flexible. In part, their insistence upon these goals appears to have resulted from their dissatisfaction with the internal structure of other organizations, and especially with the preceding adult education organizations, for we find in the First Annual Report the following comment:

> It would be difficult to understand the organizational structure and administrative practice that has emerged without understanding the consuming concern of the members of the Founding Assembly to avoid such mistakes of the past--as they perceived them--as control by the few, over-emphasis on national needs and achievements, centralization in a "Mecca," pressure toward conformity to a blueprint, and rigid organization.

The concern with membership control, however, may have been salient for the founders also because, as teachers of democracy and citizenship responsibility, they may have felt that their own organization should be exemplary in the practice of democratic principles.[1]

Efforts to Achieve Democratic Control. The desire for flexibility similarly appears related to the particular needs of the field of adult education. The founders apparently recognized that the functions of neither adult education nor AEA were completely clear. In any event they were not expected to remain static. Therefore it was felt that "a structure should be erected that will be sensitive to the real and changing needs of the members, the movement, and society."[2] This concern with flexibility apparently was so great that it seems even to have cast doubt on the value of having an initial set of rules for governing the organization, for we find in the First Annual Report the unusual statement: "Were it not a requirement of the laws of incorporation, there would today perhaps be no such thing as a Constitution of the Adult Education Association of the United States of America."[3]

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*This chapter was written by William L. Nicholls II.

[1] This point was presented in print after the founding by Coolie Verner and Wilbur C. Hallenbeck in their article, "A Challenge to the Adult Education Association" (Adult Education, vol. II, no. 4, April 1952). These authors note: "Because adult educators are more keenly concerned with the development of active adult citizenship than are any other single group . . . the Adult Education Association can and should be the avant garde in evolving a dynamic pattern of organization which genuinely implements democratic values."

Importance of Delegate Assembly. A constitution was, of course, adopted, and it was designed to insure democratic control of the organization, allow for flexibility, and provide direction for the AEA and the field of adult education. Undoubtedly the most distinctive feature of the elaborate structure established by the constitution is the Delegate Assembly, "consisting of not fewer than 150 individual members," which "shall be responsible for formulating the policies of the Association . . . ." In addition, an Executive Committee was called for, consisting of the officers of the Association and fifteen other members, which was to "interpret and carry out the policies of the Association as determined by the Delegate Assembly." The officers of the association serve both as officers of the Delegate Assembly and of the Executive Committee.

Initially most of the powers of the membership were vested in the Delegate Assembly rather than in the Executive Committee. Not only was the Delegate Assembly given the exclusive privilege to determine policy, but it was also specifically charged with the following responsibilities: Determining the time, place, and character of the annual and special conferences; fixing the dues for membership; evaluating the effectiveness of the association; and adopting the annual budget.

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[2] First Annual Report of the Adult Education Association of the U. S. A., p. 8.

[3] Ibid., p. 4.

In the early days of the association, the Delegate Assembly appeared to have yet another role not specifically called for in the Constitution. It was seen by some as a structure to locate social problems and involve the entire field in the use of adult education to help solve them. The Report of the First National Conference[4] emphasizes this function, as does the First Annual Report, which includes the following statement:

> The contemporary function of adult education is not yet settled. It may never be. But the AEA has built within its structure a mechanism for evaluation and assigned this to its legislative body--the Delegate Assembly. The Association has emphasized the collection of information as a means of giving guidance in planning, and it has endeavored to find the means of involving its members in making decisions that affect not merely the AEA as an organization, but the development and extension of adult education as an instrument of problem solving.

Over the years there has been some shift of power from the Delegate Assembly to the Executive Committee. At present the Delegate Assembly merely sets the general policies with regard to the annual budget and the national conferences, and the Executive Committee adopts the budget and determines the place, time and character of the national conferences. In other respects, however, the Executive Committee remains, at least formally, the carefully circumscribed body called for by the Constitution. Unlike the delegates, the Executive Committee members may not succeed themselves, and their nomination is placed in the hands of the Delegate Assembly. Furthermore, by utilizing the label of "Executive Committee" rather than the more traditional "Board of Directors," the

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[4] Adult Education, vol. II, no. 2, December 1951, pp. 41-47.

Executive Committee was symbolically as well as constitutionally limited to executing the wishes of the Delegate Assembly, rather than given the opportunity to create and implement policy on its own. Thus rather elaborate formal measures were taken to vest most of the power in the body nearest the membership, the Delegate Assembly, and prevent the concentration of power in an oligarchy established in the Executive Committee.

The granting of extensive powers to a Delegate Assembly, while not unique, is not, of course, the practice in all national organizations. To cite two examples in closely related organizations, neither the Canadian Association for Adult Education nor the National Association of Public School Adult Educators has a comparable body. Rather, these organizations are largely run by a Board of Directors. Other organizations utilize the entire membership present at national conventions to serve some of the functions carried out at the AEA's Delegate Assembly, while reserving most of the policy making powers to a Board of Directors.

One other democratic practice of the AEA deserves special comment. All officers of the AEA, members of the Executive Committee other than those ex-officio, and all 150 plus members of the Delegate Assembly, are elected directly by the membership on a competitive ticket. Needless to say, the cost in time and money of securing the many nominations and conducting the elections by mail is considerable, and the fact that such expenses are incurred to further "democratize" the organization is additional evidence of its concern with democracy.

Charges of Lack of Democracy. Considering these democratic practices and mechanisms, it is perhaps surprising to learn that the AEA has come under heavy attack from both its members and leaders as undemocratic or ineffective in its internal structure. Of course most of the members have so little contact with the AEA that they are unable to evaluate its internal organization. Thus 45 per cent who answered the questionnaire could not say whether it "successfully harmonizes the divergent views and interests of its members"; 57 per cent could not say whether it was "an organization whose official pronouncements and decisions reflect the wishes of the great majority of its members"; and 53 per cent did not know if it was "an organization which has proved effective in representing its members' views to important people and organizations outside it," a function which presumably rests largely with its elected officers. But among those members answering the questionnaire who did offer an opinion of the AEA in these areas, a large proportion were quite critical of the AEA, as shown in Table 69. Perhaps more important, those members in a position to know it best, through participation in its highest governing bodies, appear to be the most critical.

Further evidences of dissatisfaction with AEA's internal operation were found in the interviews. Among the interviewees with whom the Delegate Assembly was discussed, approximately four out of five felt it was not operating effectively, and about a fourth of these felt it might be best to eliminate the Delegate Assembly altogether. Approximately half of the interviewees listed the "leadership" of the AEA as one of its major weaknesses, and many expressed the opinion that the AEA was dominated by a clique or had been "captured" by one or another special area of adult education. How, then, did it happen that an organization which set out with such high democratic ideals came to be seen as undemocratic or ineffective in its actual operation?

Table 69: The Appropriateness of Various Descriptions of the AEA as Seen by Members at Various Levels of Involvement*

Description of AEA	Level of involvement in the AEA**					
	Exec. Comm.	Dele. Assem.	Other comm.	Conference attendees	None of these	Total
An organization which harmonizes divergent views of members						
Very appropriate	4%	13%	11%	19%	27%	21%
Somewhat appropriate	76	59	61	48	54	55
Not appropriate	20	28	28	33	19	24
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(46)	(141)	(65)	(238)	(624)	(1114)
An organization whose decisions reflect wishes of majority						
Very appropriate	17%	17%	31%	23%	28%	25%
Somewhat appropriate	50	56	50	52	52	52
Not appropriate	33	27	19	25	20	23
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(46)	(131)	(48)	(194)	(451)	(870)
An organization effective in representing members' views to outsiders						
Very appropriate	12%	18%	24%	28%	30%	27%
Somewhat appropriate	46	60	45	43	54	51
Not appropriate	42	22	31	29	16	22
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(48)	(131)	(55)	(215)	(485)	(934)

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*Members who felt they could not express an opinion because they were not familiar enough with the AEA to say and those not answering these questions are not included.

**Members are here classified by the highest degree of involvement they had at any time.

In order to obtain a better understanding of the internal operation and organization of the AEA, we will attempt to learn which members have become most involved in its operation, examine the actual operation of the Delegate Assembly and Executive Committee, study in more detail the criticisms voiced about these bodies, and attempt to understand how these criticisms arose. In addition, it may be possible to suggest at least a few changes in the AEA's internal organization which may improve its effectiveness and reduce the criticisms made about it.

Participation in AEA's Internal Organization

Examination of the characteristics of those who have held positions in AEA's governing bodies and how these individuals differ from other members of the AEA is important for at least two reasons. First, it may provide some information about those factors which make such participation more or less likely. And second, it may test empirically the impression of some members that one or another regional, interest, or agency category of adult educators has controlled the governing bodies through numerical predominance on them.

In the following analysis four levels of participation will be utilized. These are: 1) membership on the Executive Committee, including officers; 2) membership in the Delegate Assembly; 3) membership in any of AEA's other committees; and 4) membership in none of these. Except where specifically mentioned to the contrary, all persons have been classified into the highest position they have held in the AEA any time during their membership. Thus a former member of the Executive Committee, now serving as a delegate, would be classified as an Executive Committee member.

Demographic Composition. Table 70, which is based on the questionnaire data, indicates that demographically those most involved in AEA's operation differ in several ways from other members. Those who have held important positions in the AEA are disproportionately male, older, and the holders of more advanced degrees. The Executive Committee members also appear to be drawn more frequently from the large cities than the rank and file members, although the delegates and other committee members do not differ substantially from the rank and file in this regard. The mechanism of electing delegates and Executive Committee members on a regional basis appears to have been effective in preventing a concentration in these bodies from any one region, but it seems that the members of other committees have disproportionately been drawn from the northeastern states.

Type of Position Held. Somewhat more interesting differences are observed with respect to the type of position held in adult education. As may be seen in Table 71, the higher the office held in the AEA, the greater the proportion who hold full-time paid positions concerned exclusively with adult education. AEA Executive Committee members and delegates also are found more frequently to hold administrative positions than other committee members or those with no special position in the AEA. However, the most important distinction between the delegates and the Executive Committee members appears to be tenure in the field, for Table 71 indicates that in general Executive Committee members have held paid positions in adult education longer than delegates.

That the top positions in the AEA have been held disproportionately by full-time executives with long tenure in the field of adult education

Table 70: Demographic Characteristics of Members Who Have Held Various Levels of Office in the AEA

	Highest position in AEA			
Sex	Exec. Comm.	Dele. Assem.	Other comm.	None of these
Male	74%	75%	64%	58%
Female	26	25	36	42
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Age				
Under 40	2%	11%	18%	28%
40 to 54	58	58	53	54
55 and over	40	31	29	18
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Education				
Doctorate	38%	36%	34%	15%
Master's or equivalent	50	46	51	55
College or less	12	18	15	30
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Size of home community				
Over 250,000	56%	36%	37%	40%
25,000 to 250,000	30	37	37	36
2,500 to 25,000	12	24	22	20
Under 2,500	2	3	4	4
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Region of home community				
Northeast	28%	27%	41%	32%
Central	38	38	39	35
Southeast	14	14	8	13
West	20	19	11	19
Non-contiguous states, etc.	—	1	1	1
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(50)	(158)	(78)	(1673)

Table 71: Type of Position, Level of Responsibility, and Length of Employment by Level of Office in the AEA

	Highest position in AEA			
Type of position held in adult education	Exec. Comm.	Dele. Assem.	Other comm.	None of these
All of full-time paid	60%	56%	42%	22%
Part of full-time paid	24	31	40	48
Part-time	4	4	8	7
Volunteer	12	7	9	15
No position	—	2	1	8
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Level of responsibility in position				
Top administrator	56%	59%	43%	31%
Other administrators	12	14	17	13
Broad-gauge workers	18	10	15	14
Primarily workers	10	14	22	36
Unclassifiable and no answer	2	1	1	2
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(50)	(158)	(78)	(1673)
Length of time employed in adult education*				
16 years or more	55%	31%	33%	23%
6 to 15 years	41	63	61	45
5 years or less	4	66	9	31
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(44)	(139)	(60)	(1161)

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*Information on the length of employment is provided only for those now holding a paid position in adult education.

is unlikely to be surprising to any one connected with the AEA. Full-time adult educators are most likely to have an interest in the AEA, and to find it easier to devote time to AEA's organizational matters, than persons whose jobs include responsibilities unconnected with adult education. Those in executive positions probably have funds more easily available for travel, and in general their positions commonly include more responsibility for contacts outside their own organization. Finally, since AEA's positions are elective, it is understandable that those in top positions who had been in the field the longest would be known to more adult educators than others, and consequently probably had a better chance of being elected.

As many persons are aware, the AEA is not the only national organization in adult education that many AEA members belong to. Public school adult educators often belong to both AEA and NAPSAE; university adult educators often participate in the National University Extension Association or the Association of University Evening Colleges as well as the AEA, etc. These multiple affiliations, of course, mean that the AEA does not obtain all of the time and money these people have to devote to organizational activities in their field at the national level. Table 72 indicates that the situation is most common among the top officers. This is hardly surprising, since those in AEA's top offices are disproportionately persons whose paid positions in adult education are such that they can afford membership in several organizations. However, such multiple affiliations may mean that for many members, and even officers, the AEA is a secondary affiliation or interest. This point is emphasized in Table 73. Persons who were members of additional

Table 72: Membership in Other National Organizations in Adult Education by Level of Office in the AEA*

Belongs to other national organization in adult education	Highest position in AEA			
	Exec. Comm.	Dele. Assem.	Other comm.	None of these
Yes	74%	70%	62%	44%
No	26	30	38	56
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(50)	(158)	(77)	(1623)

Table 73: The Value of AEA Membership Relative to Membership in Other National Organizations in Adult Education by Level of Office in the AEA**

Relative value of memberships	Highest position in AEA			
	Exec. Comm.	Dele. Assem.	Other comm.	None of these
AEA more valuable	36%	19%	9%	10%
AEA equally valuable	20	41	24	32
AEA less valuable	44	40	67	58
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(36)	(106)	(45)	(644)

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*The 3% of respondents not answering the question about membership in other national organizations in adult education are not included in this table.

**Only members who belonged to at least one other national organization in adult education and who were able to indicate the relative value of these other organizations to the AEA are included in this table.

national organizations in the field were asked whether they found membership in the AEA more, equally, or less valuable to themselves than membership in these other groups. Although Table 73 indicates that persons in AEA's higher positions were more likely to see their AEA membership as the "more valuable," even among members of the Executive Committee only a little more than a third selected this "more valuable" response. Clearly, for many members of the Executive Committee and Delegate Assembly, the AEA is only a secondary or partial interest.

Agency Composition. For most members, perhaps the most interesting and controversial topic concerning the elected and appointed participants in AEA's organization is their agency affiliation. Data on this topic are provided in Table 74. Its first column, labeled "Executive Committee 1951-1959," is not restricted to Executive Committee members who responded to the questionnaire, as in the previous table, but includes the agency affiliation of every person who ever sat on the Executive Committee. Similarly, the second column provides information on every delegate in the 1958 Delegate Assembly. Information in the third, fourth and fifth columns is taken from the questionnaires.

Table 74 substantiates what many interviewees suggested, that college and university affiliated members are disproportionately represented in the leadership of the AEA. Forty-three per cent of those who have sat on the Executive Committee had their primary affiliation in adult education with a college or university, and when librarians and agricultural extension persons with university posts are also counted, exactly half of these Executive Committee members had affiliations in institutions of higher learning. These college and university people have apparently been less well represented in AEA's Delegate Assembly

Table 74: Selected Primary Agencies by Level of Office in the AEA

	From records		From the 1958 questionnaire		
Primary agency	Exec. Comm. 1951-9	1958 Dele. Assem.	Dele. Assem.	Other comm.	Total members*
College or university	43%	37%	33%	25%	19%
Public school	18	27	26	21	15
Library	9	8	6	14	5
Agricultural or home economics extension	5	2	7	11	6
Business and industry	5	3	1	3	4
Labor unions	5	1	1	--	1
Adult education councils	2	5	3	1	1
Civic and fraternal	1	1	2	--	3
Youth serving	2	2	1	6	9
Church or religious	--	3	2	1	11
Health and welfare	2	3	3	11	12
Other	5	7	14	7	14
Unascertainable	3	1	1	--	6
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(88)	(153)	(156)	(76)	(1903)

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*Members not claiming to hold a position in adult education are excluded from these percentages.

and other committees, but even in these bodies they are substantially over-represented in comparison with their proportion in the 1958 total membership.[5]

Figure 3 provides some additional information about presence of the university people on the Executive Committee. First, it shows that a substantial proportion of these university affiliated committee members have been drawn from that very small group of individuals who are professors of adult education in university departments of education. At least two such professors have been on the Executive Committee each year of its existence, and in total, about an eighth of all persons who have been on the Executive Committee have held such a position. The remaining university affiliated committee members are almost all university extension or evening college administrators. During the last four years their numbers on the Executive Committee have been substantially increasing, and in the current Executive Committee they hold a majority.

As shown in Table 74, public school adult educators have also been disproportionately represented in AEA's internal organization. However, currently they appear much stronger in the Delegate Assembly than on the Executive Committee. During the last two years their only representation on the Executive Committee has consisted of the president of NAPSAE who is automatically an ex-officio member.

Both Table 74 and Figure 3 indicate that the librarians, labor educators, and adult educators in business and industry have been well

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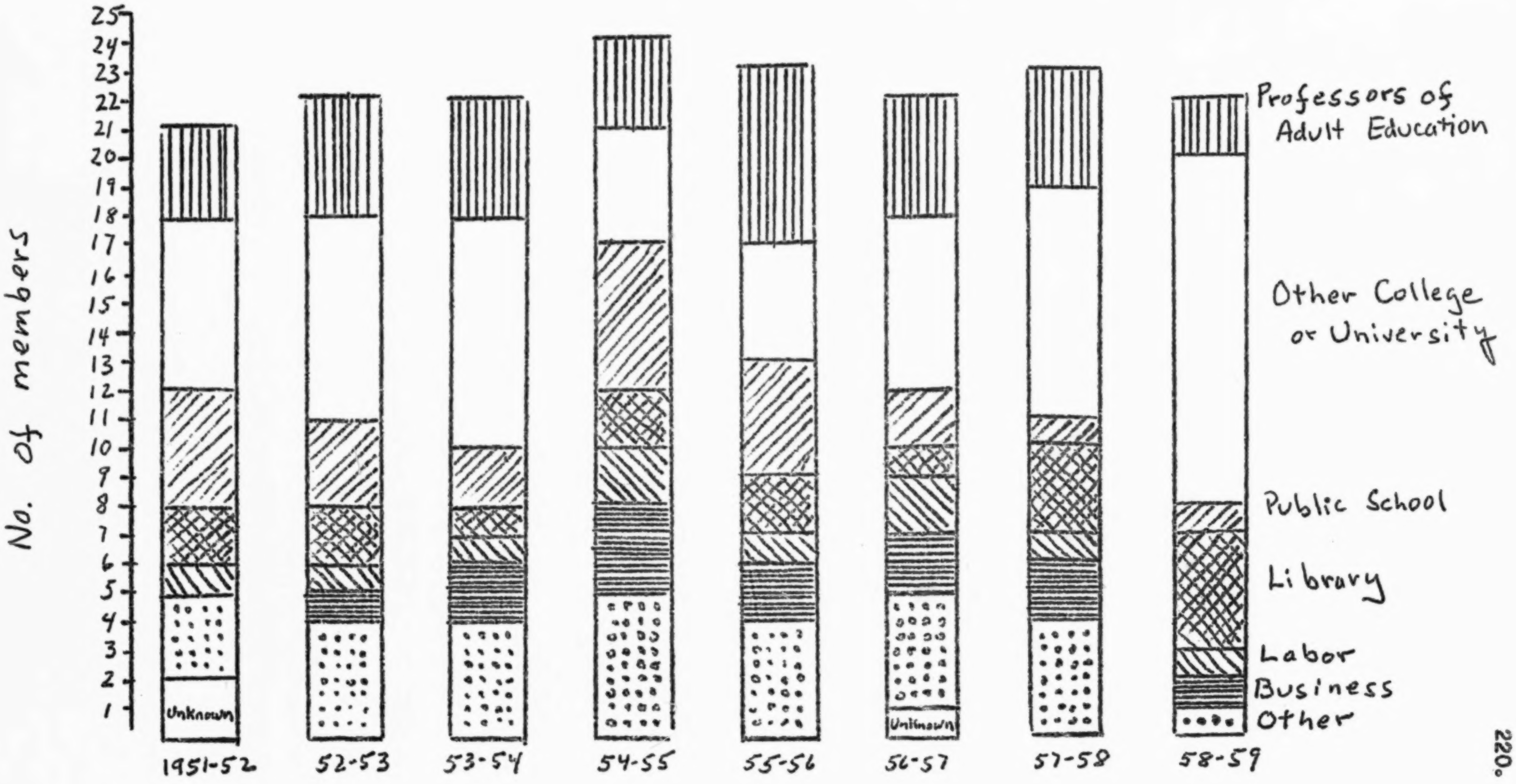
[5] Here and in the next few pages data from the 1958 membership survey have been used to represent the AEA membership for comparison with those who have ever been on the Executive Committee, even though it is recognized that the composition of the membership has fluctuated over the years. The 1958, rather than the 1952 or 1956, survey has been used because 1) it is the most recent, and 2) in most cases the proportion of members in the major agencies in 1958 is found to fall between the highs and lows found in 1952 and 1956. Cf. Table 9 of Chapter IV.

Figure 3: Representation on AEA's Executive Committee Over Its Eight Years of Existence



represented in both Executive Committee and the Delegate Assembly. On the other hand, various other agencies have been greatly under-represented in these governing bodies. Among these are civic and fraternal organizations, churches and religious organizations, youth serving agencies, and health and welfare organizations.

Reasons for Some Imbalance. There appear to be several factors which have contributed to the disproportionate number of academicians in the governing bodies of the AEA. As previously noted, those in the Executive Committee and Delegate Assembly tend to be drawn largely from the full-time paid personnel in the field, and there tend to be more such people, at least in AEA's membership, in the academic institutions than elsewhere. Also, as previously indicated, those from the academic institutions more frequently attend AEA's national conferences and are therefore disproportionately involved in AEA's activities, while the only contact with the AEA that the great majority of adult educators in health and welfare, civic and fraternal, church and religious organizations, etc., have with the AEA is the reading of a magazine.

As several interviewees have suggested, the holding of competitive elections for positions in the Executive Committee and Delegate Assembly may also help to increase the number of those from the academic institutions on these bodies. Since few of the people listed on the ballots are generally known to the members, there is probably a tendency to vote for 1) those best known in the field, such as the professors of adult education whose publications are widely seen within the field; 2) those in top administrative positions which are clearly central to the field, such as state or large city directors of adult education, in the public schools and extension deans; or 3) those from the most prestigeful institutions in the field, once again the universities.

However unpremeditated the academic numerical predominance on the governing bodies of the AEA may be, some members have come to see this situation as dangerous or undemocratic. Somehat more than a quarter of those interviewed commented on the "dominance" in the AEA of "the university people," "the professors," "the public school people," or, more generally, "those interested in formal education."[6] Frequently these charges of "dominance" were qualified by additional comments to the effect that such a situation wasn't necessarily evil or premeditated or was "natural." However, for some, such as the individuals quoted below, the situation seemed more serious. Thus one former Executive Committee member, commenting on the presence of several professors of adult education in that body, said:

> The AEA seems to be one conspiracy after another. Now there is a conspiracy of the professors. . . . The organization is controlled by those who feel that a person shouldn't have a job unless they taught them.

Another former Executive Committee member who previously was connected with a university but is now in another area of adult education commented:

> I feel that /the AEA/ has some difficulty in promoting the broad concept of adult education because the organization is dominated by collegiate adult educators who tend to think of adult education in terms of formal adult education. The Executive Committee and officers have come from the collegiate field. The formal type has taken precedence.

However, in the opinion of the authors, the disproportionate number of academic, and especially university, people in the Executive Committee and Delegate Assembly has not as yet led to widespread concern on the part of those interviewed. Should the current trend towards a greater proportion of university adult educators on the Executive Committee continue, strong dissatisfaction might possibly be voiced by the leaders of other agencies and organizations in the field. Especially in this body it would seem that perhaps more care might be taken to nominate persons from a wider range of institutions than is currently found on the Executive Committee.

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[6] Of course, many of these comments came from non-academically situated adult educators, but in several cases public school adult educators were concerned about the "university dominance" and university adult educators were worried about the "NAPSAE dominance."

This is emphatically not to say that Executive Committee or Delegate Assembly membership should be exactly in proportion to the total membership of the AEA in the various agencies, if for no other reason than that the AEA probably will of necessity rely in the future, as in the past, disproportionately upon those members in the more widely recognized and most fully established agencies and institutions. As a more realistic goal, it would seem possible to aim at a representation which approximates in agency composition not the total membership but those who attend the annual conferences. In this way allowance would be made for differences in the members' interests and economic feasibility of participation, but an attempt would be made to have the governing bodies representative of at least the more active members.[7]

Interest Composition. Another way in which the participants in AEA's internal organization have been thought to differ meaningfully from the members is in their interests within the field of adult education, specifically as to which side of the content-method controversy they took.[8] When the interviewees were asked whether "AEA represents any particular kind of philosophy of adult education" or whether "there are any areas of adult education which are over-represented," about two-thirds mentioned the division between those interested in content (especially liberal education) and those interested in method (especially group dynamics). About 40 per cent of the interviewees felt that "the group dynamics crowd" had taken over or dominated the AEA in the past, and another 30 per cent denied that those interested in methods had actually gained control, but they emphasized that there had been conflict between the content and the methods advocates over AEA leadership, and often they went on to comment that these disputes had been bitter and detrimental to the AEA. A minority felt that the combatants seemed more concerned with promoting their particular side of the controversy than with the welfare of the AEA.

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[7] It would also seem easier to check on such representativeness with regard to the conference-goers, since this would involve only a question or two on the conference registration blanks, while information on the total membership would probably require an annual survey.

The claim that the group dynamicists had taken over the AEA is undoubtedly much more serious than the current assertion that the colleges have taken over, because many more saw the former situation as one of conscious conspiracy. Furthermore, the conflict appears to have aroused considerable emotionalism, as may be found in the following comments:

> [There is no domination] now, but the group dynamics clique would go to almost any extreme to retain control and especially to circumvent the "package program" boys, represented strongly by the Fund for Adult Education.
>
> - - - - -
>
> Some groups have tried to promote their philosophy to the exclusion of others, i.e. group dynamics. This hurt the AEA. Group dynamics people are the most undemocratic in their philosophy, the most dictatorial and manipulative in trying to achieve ends. Hence they aroused antagonism.

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[8] This same controversy, and certain more specific variations of it, also seems to have been important both in bringing about some of the AEA's direction finding efforts and in handicapping the successful completion of these efforts. These matters are discussed in more detail in Chapter XII. The present chapter is concerned with this controversy only in its relationship to democratic practices in the AEA and the members' images of these practices.

Some, however, felt that the "domination" as they perceived it had its good side also.

> [The AEA] was accused of being dominated by the group dynamics wing, but it is now counterbalanced to the point where no one group dominates it. This is not to say it shouldn't have been dominated. Then [the AEA] stood for something new and different in the field.

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> For a few years the group dynamics group were [over-represented]. I'm not saying they didn't have something. I know that one function of the organization is to inspire its members, and I know some of the group dynamics meetings did this. But it's not a good idea to let any one trust get in control.

As several of the above quotations indicate, very few people feel that the group dynamics advocates control the AEA today. Rather, many of the interviewees noted that the proponents of the two sides of the content vs. methods controversy are today more nearly balanced, that conflict within the organization has been lessening, even though complete harmony has not yet been achieved, and that the leaders who have most recently been elected are least involved in these controversies.

If it is accepted as a fact that the advocates of group dynamics did gain control of the AEA but no longer have it, it is possible to argue that this incident proves the weakness of AEA's democratic structure. That any one group or interest could take control, even for a short time, apparently has led to a disillusionment on the part of some of those interviewed with regard to the AEA. On the other hand, it can also be argued, as indeed some of the interviewees did, that since an overbalance of group dynamics has been corrected through AEA's democratic processes, they can't be as ineffective as some have claimed.

The authors do not feel sufficiently informed about the internal politics of the AEA in its early years either to confirm or deny that the advocates of group dynamics had in fact intentionally taken over control of the AEA in order to advance their interests in adult education. However, they do wish to emphasize the following points: 1) As noted in Chapter III, the content of Adult Leadership, while produced by the paid staff, certainly did devote a great many pages to group process and related topics. 2) The corresponding neglect of other interests and aspects of adult education in this publication was seen as unfair and evidence for capture of the AEA by the group process advocates by the many members in the more traditional areas of adult education. 3) The charges of control by the group dynamics wing and, more generally, the conflict between the advocates of method and content, have apparently provided one of the major bases for claims that the AEA is undemocratic and unable to handle its internal conflicts successfully. 4) The conflict appears to have softened recently, and by more careful policy in the future it should be possible to reestablish more respect for the organization and its leadership in the future. Perhaps the leaders would do well to follow the advice of one long-time friend of the AEA who made the following comment:

> I believe that the AEA can't be a partisan when there are strong views on philosophy and method. It should be a place for different ideologies to come together, to argue, and battle them out. It is not a bad thing to have these tensions in an organization; this is healthy, a sign of growth. But you can't afford to take sides.

On a grosser level, some statistical evidence may be offered on the interests of those who have participated most actively in AEA's internal organization. As shown in Table 75, the members of AEA's Executive Committee and Delegate Assembly much more frequently checked "Providing broad, comprehensive adult education" on the questionnaires

Table 75: The Summarized Areas of Interests by Level of Office in the AEA

Summarized areas of interest	Highest position in AEA Exec. Comm.	 Dele. Assem.	 Other comm.	 None of these
Providing broad, comprehensive adult education	58%	59%	42%	29%
Liberal education	42	40	37	25
Social and interpersonal methods and education	40	49	55	64
Education for special roles and interests	18	31	40	45
Work-related education	40	39	36	39
Remedial education	10	14	6	6
No answer	2	1	1	2
	210%*	217%	233%	202%
Base of %	(50)	(158)	(78)	(1673)

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*Percentages total more than 100% because respondents frequently expressed an interest in more than one area.

as one of their major personal areas of interest than did the rank and file members. Furthermore, this interest appears to be even more common to recent members of the Executive Committee than to those who were members of this body in the past, as may be noted in Table 76. That these recent leaders hold this broad interest rather than an exclusive interest in one or another more restricted area of adult education may be seen as a hopeful sign that the leaders are becoming less frequently proponents of special views on adult education.

Table 76. The Summarized Areas of Interest of Recent and Past Members of the Executive Committee

Summarized areas of interest	Recent* members	Past members
Providing broad, comprehensive adult education	71%	48%
Liberal education	43	41
Social and interpersonal methods and education	43	38
Education for special roles and interests	10	24
Work-related education	38	41
Remedial education	5	14
No answer	—	2
	210%**	208%
Base of %	(21)	(29)

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*Recent members include all persons who sat on the Executive Committee during its 1957-58 or 1958-59 sessions.

**Totals exceed 100% because respondents indicated more than one area of interest.

Table 75 also indicates that the members of the Executive Committee, and to a lesser extent those of the Delegate Assembly and other committees, are more frequently interested in liberal education (including public and international affairs, liberal arts, and economic education) than the rank and file members, and are less frequently interested in social and interpersonal techniques and education (including community development, human relations training, intergroup relations, and group work). A similar pattern was reported in Chapter IV, where it was found that the more active members--that is, those who read both magazines and those who attend the conferences--were disproportionately interested in liberal education and less frequently interested in social and interpersonal education than the less active members. However, only among the Executive Committee members, who may be considered the most active members, is the proportion interested in liberal education so much greater, and the proportion interested in interpersonal education so much less, than in the total membership that the proponents of these two sets of interests are approximately equal in number.[9] At all other levels of activity those interested in interpersonal education appear to hold a numerical advantage.[10]

Here again the authors are not implying that it would necessarily be advisable to have the governing bodies exactly representative of the interest distribution of the total membership. For example, there undoubtedly are advantages in having a leadership with interests in the broader aspects of adult education, and the price for this may be that not as many of the smaller interest areas are specifically represented in the leadership.[11] Nor may those essentially subscriber-members, whose interests lie primarily in reading Adult Leadership, be interested enough in the AEA as an organization to wish to participate more fully in its internal affairs. These variations in interests between the leadership and the rank and file membership may be crucial, however, if the leadership mistakenly assumes that the members' interests correspond to its own and neglects these differences in publication policy and related areas.

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[9] At least on this gross statistical level, it may be noted that there is little evidence for the belief that the advocates of group dynamics (which is only one part of the general category of social and interpersonal methods and interests) held a numerical predominance on the Executive Committee, even in the past.

[10] There is, of course, some danger in attempting to assess the exact proportions with varying interests from data such as that presented in Table 75. Not only are such data subject to bias in the returning of questionnaires, but the rough ad hoc method of obtaining these indicators of general interests adds additional uncertainty in that other equally ad hoc methods could perhaps produce different results.

The Delegate Assembly

Although the Constitution allows for the possibility of more frequent meetings, thus far the Delegate Assembly has met only in conjunction with the annual conferences. The Assembly sessions generally extend over two or three days, the first of them being fitted into the conference schedule but the final ones falling after all other conference activities have ceased. Thus the delegates are required to remain at the conference city an extra day or two. The meetings consist of relatively long reports on the activities of the association, numerous recommendations and motions from the many sections and committees of the AEA, and some policy decisions. Many of the recommendations can not be sent to the delegates in advance because they are not drawn up until the meetings of the sections are held at the conference. Consequently they must be read in full, and several delegates have complained that much time is consumed in listening to these and clarifying their meaning. The sessions generally follow a modified parliamentary procedure, but at times the delegates have been divided into "buzz groups" to discuss the more critical issues.

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[11] This is definitely not to imply that members who hold the less common interests in conjunction with broader interests would not be useful and valuable leaders.

Attendance at the Delegate Assembly. By and large, attendance at the Assembly sessions has not been high. At the 1958 meeting only 44 per cent of the official delegates were registered at the conference, or 57 per cent counting alternates substituting for absent delegates. Nor do the delegates typically remain for all the sessions of the Assembly. At the 1958 meeting, only one-third of the delegates present indicated that they could stay for the final scheduled session, a session which eventually was not held.

The president of the association has the right to fill any vacancies by appointment, in consultation with the chairman of the Committee on Elections, and generally many such appointments are made from among the conference attendees who are willing to remain. Thus the final sessions of the Delegate Assembly tend to consist of a relatively small group, many of whom were not elected to office. Arthur P. Crabtree in his article, "Obedience to the Unenforceable," reports that at the 1958 Assembly forty places were filled by appointment, and only eighty-four persons were present at the last session of the Assembly, including visitors.[12] Crabtree concludes that "of the 243 delegates and alternates elected, it is fairly reasonable to conjecture that . . . less than 17 per cent attended the conference and stayed through all the sessions of the Delegate Assembly."[13]

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[12] Adult Leadership, vol. 7, no. 3.

[13] Ibid. p. 227. The Delegates Handbook for 1958 lists only 153 delegates and 69 alternates. Crabtree has apparently included officers and Executive Committee members in his figures.

The failure of the delegates to attend the Assembly or remain for its entirety has frequently been discussed in the AEA. Usually the discussion is put in a moral frame of reference with the emphasis on the fact that "those who are elected ought to fulfill their obligations." Sometimes the emphasis is put on the "failure to find delegates who will attend." Both approaches implicitly assume that more than 150 individuals can be found within the AEA who are both willing and able to take on the position of delegate. Here we shall begin by doubting that assumption and seek to learn why it is that generally so few delegates attend.

As most would suspect, attendance at the Delegate Assembly is greatest for those states near the conference site. At the 1958 Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio was the only large state with a 100 per cent attendance of delegates.[14] Approximately 70 per cent of the delegates from states bordering Ohio attended, as contrasted with 51 per cent of the next closest ring of states which included Wisconsin, Illinois, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Tennessee, and the District of Columbia. Beyond this point, however, additional distance did not appear to make as much difference. The next ring of states, including the New England states, the deep South, and the Missouri Valley states, had a 53 per cent turnout of delegates, and the remaining states at the greatest distance, 41 per cent.

Some members have suggested that states in AEA's Joint Membership Plan send a larger proportion of delegates to the Assembly because of their greater involvement in the election of the delegates. While some statistical evidence supports this view, the differences in attendance between the delegates from states in the Joint Membership Plan and the others is not large. Sixty-three per cent of the delegates from the joint states attended the 1958 Conference, as contrasted with 50 per cent of the delegates from other states.[15]

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[14] In these percentages delegates at large are not counted, but attending alternates filling in for absent delegates are counted as attending delegates. The bases of the percentages, however, include only the elected delegates. Thus, if a state has three places in the Delegate Assembly, and one regular delegate and one alternate attend, two-thirds of the delegates were counted as attending.

Apparently more important than coming from a Joint Membership state is membership in NAPSAE. Among the 32 regular delegates who were members of NAPSAE, 66 per cent attended the 1958 Conference as compared with 39 per cent of other delegates.[16] The fact that the NAPSAE Conference precedes AEA's at the same site doubtless explains this. Because of this higher attendance rate of NAPSAE members and because NAPSAE members make up an even higher proportion of alternates (29 per cent) than they do of delegates (21 per cent), almost a third of the attending alternates and delegates at the 1958 Conference were NAPSAE members. Therefore, if it is true, as some persons most closely connected with the AEA assert, that NAPSAE members are the most likely to leave the Delegate Assembly early because they have been at the conference the longest, this relatively high proportion of NAPSAE members in the Delegate Assembly may account in part for the declining number of delegates in the final sessions.

Perhaps the most interesting and suggestive variation in attendance of delegates, however, occurs with regard to the size of the state delegations. As may be seen in the following table, the smaller the number of delegates from a state, the smaller the proportion of delegates who attended.

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[15] The percentages were computed as indicated previously. Similar differences were found even when the effects of distance were controlled.

[16] Attending alternates are not counted as attending delegates in these percentages since the alternates from the same state as the delegates need not necessarily both be NAPSAE members.

Size of delegation	No. delegates from this sized delegation	Per cent attending the Dele. Assem. in 1958*
1	21	43%
2	12	50%
3	48	50%
4	12	58%
5+	50	65%
"at large"	10	80%

Although several interpretations of this finding are possible, the probability is that in the smaller states, which have a smaller pool of members to draw from, it is very difficult to find even one or two people who are certain to attend the annual conferences for two years in a row (the term of a delegate). Consequently it is necessary to nominate delegates who only suspect that they may be able to attend, or who can attend the first scheduled conference after their election but are not certain to attend the second. This situation was uncovered in several interviews. For example, consider the situation in one state which is supposed to send two delegates to the Assembly:

> The last time I was asked to get up a list of people for nominations for the Delegate Assembly, I sent out letters to fifty people in the state asking them (1) if they were active; (2) if they could go to the San Diego meeting; and (3) whether they would be willing to be a delegate. Only one person replied yes to all three. Since I knew I was going to the meeting, I put my name in, too, because if I didn't go, I knew nobody else would.

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*These percentages include alternates filling in for absent delegates.

The speaker here, incidentally, was an adult educator highly involved in NAPSAE who, feeling that he had been away from home long enough, left the conference before the Delegate Assembly concluded.

Other delegates in similar situations sometimes noted that, when nominated, they had protested they were not certain to attend, but they had been nominated anyway, apparently because no one else could be found who even thought he might attend the conference. This situation is almost certain to arise in the smaller states. For example, 28 of the smallest states with an aggregate of 48 delegates (or slightly less than a third of the entire Assembly) were represented at the Annual Conference in 1958 by no more than four persons apiece, counting delegates, alternates, members of AEA who were not delegates, and persons not members of AEA. When it is realized that many of these people could not officially serve as delegates, were not interested in being delegates, or did not know one or two years in advance that they could attend the conferences, it is easy to see why it is often difficult to find persons to nominate for the Delegate Assembly who are certain to remain for all its sessions.

To study this problem further, the 18 members of the Delegate Assembly, interviewed after the 1958 Conference, were questioned about their failure to attend or to remain for all the sessions. As might be expected, the most common reason for failure to attend was a lack of funds. Few delegates can personally afford the total cost of attending the conferences, and travel funds from their agencies appear to be meagre or uncertain. In several cases these non-attending delegates reported that they were only too willing to attend the conference but unforeseen cuts in their agencies' budgets made this impossible. In some cases, personal funds or help from the employing agency made possible attendance at a nearby conference, but the following year when the conference was further away, funds were not sufficient. Less common reasons offered for non-attendance or leaving the conference prior to the final session of the Assembly were: 1) unexpected demands of job; 2) a conflict with a meeting of another adult education organization; 3) illness; and 4) failure to realize that the Delegate Assembly was expected to meet following the conference.[17]

Consideration of the mere numbers of people involved in AEA's governing bodies also raises doubts about the wisdom of expecting full attendance at the Assembly. Counting only those who are both paid members and have attended at least one annual conference, the current participating membership of the AEA is probably between 1500 and 2000 individuals. Even at the higher figure, about one in every eight of these was an officer, Executive Committee member, delegate, or alternate in 1958. One may therefore wonder if it is really necessary and realistic to expect so large a proportion of these participating members to be directly involved in the AEA's internal operation.

Probably equally important to a delegate's motivation to attend the Assembly is his belief as to the value of his participation in it. Some 17 delegates, including both those who did and did not attend all the sessions, were asked whether they felt it made any difference to the AEA or to the people who elected them whether they attended or not. Only two of these 17 felt that their presence made any difference, and these two stressed their obligation to carry out the duties of a post if elected. Only one person mentioned that he felt he had accomplished anything either for the AEA or for those he represented. Based on the replies of these 17 members, it would seem that serving in the Delegate Assembly is not considered by many a pleasant and fruitful task.[18] Evaluative comments by these and other interviewees explain this conclusion.[19]

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[17] Because the delegates felt they had good and sufficient reasons for not being present at all sessions of the Assembly, there appeared to be resentment on the part of some toward the reprimands delivered by the officers for their non-attendance. This feeling would seem most likely to occur among those delegates who felt they had sufficiently explained at the time of their nomination that they did not choose to run because they were not certain they could attend all sessions.

General Evaluations of the Delegate Assembly. About a fifth of the interviewees who discussed the Delegate Assembly felt that it was satisfactory as presently constituted, although they often were dissatisfied with its past performances. A very small minority praised the system highly, as for example in the following quotations:

> It's a fine concept. It made people feel they had a place in the organization. There is no fear that we are autocratically run. Before it was formed, the whole country was concerned that we stop being a select group, as in the American Association for Adult Education, that we thought up all these devices.

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> I like the idea of a Delegate Assembly because that's the way we do things in a democracy. We elect representatives.

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> It was much fun being in it. It was a tremendous opportunity to work far into the night, if you like that sort of thing. Everyone could have his say. It's very different from most organizations where a handful of people run the show. It's a tremendous thing. . . . [The] aim seems to be to enact a democratic method for being a national organization. The AEA conventions are a living example of how this can work.

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[18] Since most of the seventeen persons interviewed on this point were those who did not attend the most recent sessions of the Assembly, it may be suspected that they disproportionately represent individuals who did not value participation in it.

[19] Thirteen of the 80 interviewees did not comment on the Delegate Assembly. In the following discussion the various proportions and percentages mentioned are therefore based on the total of 67 interviewees who did comment.

An additional fifth agreed with the idea of the Delegate Assembly in principle but had reservations about its operation or effectiveness. For these people some sort of delegate body was necessary for democratic control, and several mentioned that although it had not yet been necessary, "there may be a fight in the organization some day, . . . and then the Delegate Assembly would be needed." Others mentioned that although it didn't necessarily provide democratic control, it involved people in the organization and thus had a major function apart from its manifest one.

Criticisms of the Assembly's Operation. The most common criticism of the Delegate Assembly was that it was ineffective, unworkable, or cumbersome. Almost half of those commenting on it in the interviews expressed such a view. Some of the more extreme positions are indicated below:

> The Delegate Assembly is not functioning, but I don't know how to reform it. (A past president)

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> In my first experience [in the Delegate Assembly] I thought it was so elaborate and for what? I know the decisions never get out to the membership. Why they waste so much time on stupid parliamentary procedure, I don't know. They harangue for an hour about a word, one little word, that one of the organizations in AEA was concerned about. That may be important to the officers, but it's not important to the membership.

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> It reminds me of a mock U.N. and national convention programs in undergraduate colleges. It gives people a chance to think they have the power. It is more of an exercise than a real contribution.

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> I think the idea, on paper, of having a democratic Delegate Assembly is ideal, but it doesn't work. People come for the conferences and they don't want to go to the Delegate Assembly afterwards. As a member of the AEA I haven't seen one Delegate Assembly that was good.

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> /The Delegate Assembly/ is an unwieldy, clumsy organization, but it is the price you pay to involve people. You put them in positions of power to involve them. You have to make a compromise between face-to-face decision making and efficiency.

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> I have read the reports of the Delegate Assembly, and from these one has the feeling that the people who were there had a lot of spare time. It seems that relatively little was accomplished for the time they spent.

That so many find the Delegate Assembly unsatisfactory perhaps indicates that it may not, as many have suggested, serve to involve members in the organization. While members may feel honored to be elected to the Assembly, the actual experience in it may do as much to alienate as to involve if it is experienced as unrewarding. As most adult educators are well aware, involvement requires a good deal more than recruiting a group of people and putting them together. It also requires that the experience they share be seen as satisfying or interesting, that it provide a feeling of accomplishment. At the least, it would seem that the assumption that the Delegate Assembly is an effective instrument for involving people is worth questioning.

Lack of Constituencies. Another major criticism, voiced by about a third of those commenting, involves the fact that the great majority of the delegates have no constituency to represent--that is, they have no local or state group whose views they know and whose interests they feel they can transmit. This weakness was detected as early as 1952 by Coolie Verner and Wilbur C. Hallenbeck, and expressed in their article, "A Challenge to the Adult Education Association."[20] There they noted that the use of a body of delegates became truly democratic only when the delegates were representative of some group from whom they received instructions and to whom they could report and turn for advice. Without such a constituency, only the form of democracy remains.

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[20] _Adult Education_, vol. II, no. 4 (April 1952), pp. 135-39.

The delegates' lack of constituencies appears to have several other consequences. Because the delegates do not represent anyone, some members doubt that the official pronouncements of the Assembly can have much meaning, apart from the personal beliefs of the delegates. Such a feeling undoubtedly tends to weaken the belief that the Assembly is an important body. Other delegates appear reluctant to express their views in the Assembly because they are uncertain how those who elected them feel. And finally, without any group whom they feel obliged to represent, the delegates may feel less motivated to attend the Assembly. As one delegate who did not attend in 1958 noted:

> If I had an organization to really represent, I think I would have felt obliged to go. I never felt I represented /my city/ because they just picked me out because I had spoken up /at an abortive attempt to form a local association/. I never really knew how I was nominated. Maybe it was because I was known at Bethel and known by the people in the city.

Another delegate commented:

> It made absolutely no difference to the bulk of the membership in /my state/ whether I attended or not because they are not that interested in the national AEA. Out of maybe 100 members in /my state/ only 15 or 20 votes were made for delegates. If they're not concerned about voting for a delegate, they are not likely to care what he did at the meeting.

Complexity of the AEA. Some of the interviewees have suggested that there is another major difficulty which the Delegate Assembly must face, the complexity of the AEA and its problems. At times this problem is seen as one of obtaining more informed delegates, as in the following comment:

> I don't see how anyone should be elected [to the Assembly] who isn't familiar with the AEA, because it's too complex. They should make sure that they know the workings of adult education and the AEA before they are nominated. The Delegate Assembly has not been working too well because there are too many people in it who are not sufficiently aware of the AEA and its problems.

For many, however, the problem is seen as the extremely difficult task of understanding what the AEA is, what its problems are, and what can be done about them. Considering the highly complex committee structure, the nebulous relationships between the AEA and CNO and NAPSAE, about which even the officers are uncertain, and the various difficulties, financial and otherwise, through which the AEA has recently passed, one may understand why many delegates are confused about the operation of AEA and what they as delegates can do to improve it. Even a sixty-odd page set of documents mailed to the delegates prior to the meeting can hardly be expected to acquaint them with the structure of the AEA and the issues facing it.[21] As one member with long experience in the Delegate Assembly put it:

> There was a noble effort made to bring decision making to the membership and the Delegate Assembly, and this showed a desire to make the organization grass roots. But the organization grew so fast and the problems that were presented to the Delegate Assembly were so complex, that it exhausted the delegates to think about them.

Behind this and the foregoing criticisms of the Delegate Assembly may lie an even more basic problem. As one interviewee commented, the ineffectiveness of the Assemblies is frustrating "because they're supposed to be important." The Constitution of the AEA has placed all the policy making power in the hands of the Delegate Assembly, and although in recent years there has been some shift of power to the Executive Committee, formally it is the Delegate Assembly which should make the important policy decisions for the AEA. The Assembly is not, as some members seem to think, merely a means of providing communication from the local areas to the Executive Committee, but the central political body of the AEA. This places a tremendous responsibility on the delegates, perhaps a greater responsibility than they can carry. Without a more thorough knowledge of the AEA's structure and problems, and without a constituency who can be consulted for advice, the delegate may have fewer resources than he needs to fulfill his constitutional functions. To the extent that this is recognized by the more conscientious delegates, it may lie at the basis of some of the criticisms of the Assembly and its ineffectiveness, for the delegates could not help but be critical of an institution which sets them difficult tasks but fails to provide the means for completing them.[22]

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[21] Some members through long experience in the AEA have come to master these problems, but the disparity in knowledge between them and the newer members has at least in some cases raised additional problems by creating in the minds of some members the impression that the Delegate Assembly is run by a few "old hands" who make all the decisions.

Possible Solutions. Of those interviewed, fewer were able to offer solutions to the Delegate Assembly's problems than provided criticisms of it, and there was little consensus on what should be done. Some members felt the solution lay in a better nominations system, the details of which could not be supplied, which would insure the election of more informed and more dedicated delegates. Considering the forementioned difficulty of locating delegates, one may question whether much improvement can actually be hoped for from this suggestion.

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[22] That the delegates may evade the tasks by turning them over to the Executive Committee, the officers, or some other committee, would not necessarily mean that the problem was successfully solved. It might only indicate an admission of failure of the Delegate Assembly to handle them adequately.

Another relatively common solution mentioned was the providing of constituencies for the delegates by having them elected by state or local associations where such exist, and by creating new associations for the delegates where they do not. Such a process has already begun in the establishment of the Joint Membership Plan but, as previously indicated, its effect, at least on the attendance of delegates, thus far appears modest.[23] It is undoubtedly true that if the delegates were elected by active local and state associations throughout the country, the Assembly would be a much more meaningful body. This solution, however, would not necessarily improve the operating efficiency of the Assembly. More important, this solution to the problems of the Delegate Assembly presupposes the solution of the even greater problem, discussed elsewhere, of how to establish active local and state associations throughout the country. While there is no attempt to disparage the work already being done in this direction, it should be pointed out that many states and cities are a long way from having the requisite active associations.

Other proposed solutions to the problems of the Delegate Assembly included the following: 1) Turning over more power to the Executive Committee and delimiting the Delegate Assembly's power; 2) Reducing the number of delegates; 3) Better organization and leadership of the Assembly sessions by the officers; 4) Reducing the length and the number of sessions and placing them in the center of the Conference rather than at the end; 5) Clarifying the powers of the Delegate Assembly and its tasks; and 6) More adequate briefing of the delegates in writing prior to the meeting. A very few interviewees also suggested holding regional meetings rather than national ones, increasing the powers of the Delegate Assembly, and providing travel funds for the delegates.

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[23] _Cf._ page 232 of this chapter.

As noted previously, about a fifth of those commenting on the Delegate Assembly felt it should or could be eliminated entirely by turning over all policy making functions to the Executive Committee or to an open meeting for all members who wished to attend.[24] A large number of those interviewed, however, would probably object strenuously to such a change, and many would probably agree with a former president who felt that "We have about the minimum machinery to still have membership control." However, several of the proposed changes in the Delegate Assembly, when taken together suggest that it might be possible to satisfy many leaders and delegates by making the Delegate Assembly a smaller body charged with a few crucial and clarified functions which it could carry out in one or two short sessions, the additional powers now in its hands--including some policy making--being turned over to the Executive Committee. Among the powers it should probably retain would be: 1) Nomination of the Executive Committee members and officers; 2) Fixing the membership dues; 3) Approving changes in the Constitution; 4) Setting general policy with regard to the annual conferences and the expenditure of the association's funds; and 5) Making suggestions regarding the publications and policies of the AEA. The time consuming but essentially ritualistic function of hearing and passing on the many resolutions of appreciation, commendation, and support brought forward by AEA's many committees, commissions, and sections might also be turned over to the Executive Committee, since this body is generally charged anyway with whatever minor action, such as sending a letter, these resolutions call for.[25] Many another specific rearrangement of duties might serve equally as well, provided that it resulted in a lessening of the responsibilities of the Assembly.

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[24] This position has been expressed in print by Leonard S. Stein in his article, "Should the Delegate Assembly Be Abolished" (Adult Leadership, September 1959). Stein makes the interesting point that the Delegate Assembly dissipates energies which could be put to better purposes, such as in strengthening the AEA's sections.

Such a change might also mitigate a criticism frequently made of the AEA in general, that it may have tried too hard to be democratic and in the process has failed to be capable of taking action or carrying out policies. This view is expressed in the following comments from the interviews. The first, interestingly enough, comes from a delegate cited earlier as strongly admiring the AEA as extremely democratic.

> /The AEA's/ major weakness is a tremendous insecurity about taking action. It has too great a fear of doing anything unless they are sure everybody wants it.
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> It is not necessary for it to be so everlastingly democratic, which was a reaction against things that happened in the first organization.
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> This completely permissible business, consulting everybody and his uncle for getting things done--all under the guise of getting participation of members--/has been overdone/. It should be a little less concerned with being democratic and more with doing a practical job.

For the majority, however, the suggested changes would not be seen as removing overly democratic procedures which were hindering the operation of the AEA but merely steps to make the job of the delegate less onerous and more useful.

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[25] Stein, ibid., suggests another alternative, replacing the Delegate Assembly with a consultative body composed of representatives of the special interest sections and state and local organizations, as well as any member who cared to attend. Stein sees this body as holding even fewer powers than suggested above for the Delegate Assembly. His suggestion would seem worth serious consideration as another possible solution.

The Executive Committee

The wisdom of granting more power to the Executive Committee depends of course upon the ability of this body to absorb these extra responsibilities and upon the beliefs of the members regarding its trustworthiness and conscientiousness.

The Executive Committee as presently constituted consists of the president, vice-president, president elect, immediate past president, secretary, treasurer, the presidents of NAPSAE and CNO, and fifteen members elected on a regional basis. The regular elected members have three-year terms and are not permitted to succeed themselves. However, by becoming an officer upon completion of a regular elected term in the Committee, some individuals have remained on the Committee for longer periods. In addition to the above 23 individuals, the executive secretaries of AEA, NAPSAE, and CNO also generally sit with the Committee, thus bringing the total potential membership to 26.[26] Although probably better than three-quarters of the Committee are present at one time or another during their meetings, the average attendance is probably closer to two-thirds at many sessions because some members must arrive late or leave early.

In the early days of the Association this group met more frequently, but it currently meets about three or four times a year.[27] Thus a normal elected term on the Committee requires attendance at nine to twelve meetings. These meetings generally run about two and a half days, including one or two evening sessions.

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[26] The paid staff members, of course, do not have voting privileges.

[27] The reduction in the number of meetings per year may in part have resulted from the AEA's current financial difficulties, for the travel and living expenses of the Committee members are covered by the Association. It has been estimated that each session of the Executive Committee costs approximately $2,000.00.

Criticisms about the Executive Committee. Before turning to the specific criticisms made of the Executive Committee, two general points should be made. First, it should be noted that only about half the interviewees referred specifically to the AEA's leadership or to the Executive Committee, and of those who did comment and who are quoted below, almost all have been Executive Committee members themselves. Others may have had the Executive Committee in mind when they voiced criticisms of various policies and projects of the AEA, but here only specific references to the leadership or Executive Committee will be discussed. Secondly, most of the criticisms have been directed more at Executive Committee sessions in the past than the current ones, and several interviewees have specifically stated that they feel there has been improvement recently in the operation of the Committee. No one suggested that the situation was worsening here.

Failure to Deal with Policy. Among those who discussed the Executive Committee, the most frequent criticism made of it was its failure to deal successfully with basic policy for the association. The Committee has been viewed as intentionally vague, uninterested in dealing with the basic problems of the association, unable to decide what the association was and what its goals were, and vacillating and insecure when it did attempt to deal with policy. The following comments, which were replies to a question asking about AEA's major weaknesses, illustrate these views.

> [The major difficulty] is pathological self-examination and re-examination. This is because the Executive Committee has never defined objectives or set up a clear-cut program so stated as to be able to see results.

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> The lack of leadership has been the real trouble. The decision to make decisions in a very democratic way has been the stumbling block. This results . . . from the structure of the association as built in by the founding fathers to have full democratic checking of decisions.
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> [One difficulty] is a lack of effective strategists for the long pull. We do not think ahead or align AEA with basic social trends in a way which would facilitate growth of influence and perhaps members. The Executive Committee is often too burdened with details and procedural matters for this. Such things were often brought to the entire membership.
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> It was hard to see at the early time whether the organization was really for everybody or only for the public school adult educators, the professors of adult education, and the deans of community college extension. We took this problem to the Executive Committee to ask for help, . . . but they had been so involved in chasing around the country getting grants, setting up studies, etc. that they didn't have time to think about their own organization or make such decisions. . . . This lack of definition of what the organization was, was a real weakness.

In part, of course, the placing of the blame for AEA's lack of direction on the Executive Committee may be the result of an incorrect conception of its functions. Many members both on and off the Executive Committee refer to this body as "The Board" or "The Board of Directors," and some members undoubtedly think of it as a body which has the powers of a board of directors. This is not the case, as noted earlier, for only the Delegate Assembly has the constitutional right to make policy for the association. Thus in expecting the Executive Committee to set policy for the association, some may have been wishing it to do what it has not been allowed to do constitutionally.

The Executive Committee does have the obligation to "make recommendations to the Delegate Assembly regarding future policies" and at least at this level, it appears that the Committee may not have provided as much leadership as some would like. The reasons for this, as some of the previous comments indicate, are probably not too hard to come by. At least in the association's early years the emphasis on democracy and the belief that the Delegate Assembly would make the basic policy provided an opportunity for the Committee to neglect basic policy as an area which could be handled by other organs of the association. There was also a Committee on Social Philosophy and Direction Finding which might be considered to be working in the same area. On the other hand, there appeared to be a continual press of housekeeping matters which were the sole responsibility of the Committee and which naturally obtained first attention. As one member put it, "In the past years keeping the organization intact has occupied most of the time of the leadership."[28]

Lack of Practicality. A related criticism of the Committee is that it has been overly theoretical and idealistic. As one person put it, "They very accurately see both sides of questions, but then they leave it there." The following quotations further illustrate this criticism:

> Basically [AEA's] weakness was in trying to pull together too heterogeneous a group, and I suspect it was overly intellectual as well. This wasn't true of all the leaders, but it was true of some, and consequently, the organization was beyond the practitioners. It seemed to me there was a divorce between practical problems and leadership. There was a void between the leadership and those working in the vineyards.

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> They started to reach for the stars, and they just went haywire. They had gone wild, taking off into the wild blue yonder, and there were some real big names in the Executive Committee who did this, too. They were going to explore everything and they explored it at length, but without practicality.

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[28] Some Committee members have also suggested that the Committee may have become too involved in administrative matters which were properly the responsibility of the Executive Director, such as intra-staff disputes, the decoration of the staff's offices, etc.

> There is also a kind of assumption that you can hit a target without aiming for it. They expect to achieve a lot of interest in adult education and concern about it by intellectualizing about it, and without specific programs to accomplish this.

Complaints about the Executive Committee's over-intellectualization were usually coupled with the belief that university adult educators controlled the organization, or with the criticism that in the past Adult Leadership and the field staff emphasized ideas which were not practical in terms of local resources. Another factor may also have been at work. In order to encompass all the many areas of adult education, it may have become necessary for the Executive Committee and the staff to think at such high levels of generality, that it became difficult to translate the generalities back into practical programs for the association. Such a process may represent one form of the problem of satisfying no one by trying to be all things to all people.

Internal Conflict. Another major criticism of the Executive Committee is that it has experienced an unusually large amount of internal bickering and conflict. To some extent this should have been expected in an organization with such a heterogeneous composition. Even within the Executive Committee, whose membership is less heterogeneous than that of the total organization, persons with very different backgrounds, organizational experiences, and interests were brought together. Because of this heterogeneity they undoubtedly found it more difficult to work together than the boards of the more specialized national organizations in adult education. The historical origins of the association, especially its development primarily from two organizations which had long been in competition with one another, may also have contributed to a certain amount of mutual mistrust among the leaders. The lack of consensus as to what adult education was may have created additional problems, for it appears that some members of the Committee doubted that other members were legitimately in the field. Naturally enough, those suspecting they were so regarded may have become especially defensive and insistent of the importance of their own areas and agencies. Many of these difficulties may perhaps be classified as "growing pains" of a new organization, and several persons who have had long experience in the Executive Committee have indicated that these tensions have been lessening recently. However, even today it should be recognized, as mentioned earlier, that many of the leaders do not consider the AEA the most valuable of the national organizations they belong to in adult education, and in this situation internal conflict would seem to be more likely than in organizations which obtain the first loyalties and interests of their leaders.[29]

Administrative Matters. As manager of the association's fiscal matters, the Executive Committee has also been seen by many as primarily responsible for the association's dealings with the Fund for Adult Education and for the membership promotion scheme, both of which, as elsewhere noted, have come under heavy criticism. These criticisms of the Committee have undoubtedly been aggravated by the uninformed belief of many members that the Fund merely gave the association a large sum of money and let it spend it any way it chose. Thus the use of these large sums for the membership promotion scheme, the development of Adult Leadership, and other projects on a similar scale came to be viewed by those who felt these ventures unsuccessful as a "squandering" of the association's resources on worthless activities while other needed activities, such as providing financial assistance to local and state associations, were neglected. Those who approved of the Fund-supported projects could, of course, point to the loss of the support as an equally serious matter for which it could hold the Executive Committee responsible. Once again, these criticisms appear to apply more to the past than the current activities of the Committee, and the fact that the AEA has been able to survive despite the loss of the Fund support has given at least a few members the feeling that the Executive Committee is handling the association's affairs more competently today than in the past.

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[29] It is perhaps symptomatic of this situation that Executive Committee members speaking of "my organization" or "our organization" during Committee meetings frequently are found to be referring to some other national organization in adult education than the AEA.

Clique Control. Relatively small numbers of the interviewees also made the serious charges that the Executive Committee was currently being controlled by a clique and that some of its members have been motivated more by personal ambition than by an interest in the association. Some of the comments along these lines are indicated below:

> Sometimes I think it looks as if the organization is organized to give some people a chance to be officers, and it is run for their benefit.
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> - - - - -
>
> The organization is run pretty much by the same group year after year, Easterners like ----- and people like that. No wonder the delegates don't attend. And they ask why we don't vote. Good heavens, why should we?[30]
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> - - - - -
>
> At the beginning it had a blaring, glaring start, and people joined because it was this kind of an organization. . . . The volunteer leadership of the organization was motivated by a mixture of personal glorification and interest in this big movement. There were some on the Executive Committee whose interest was only in having the red carpet rolled out for them wherever they went. . . . To many in the field it was a real disillusionment.

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[30] As noted in Table 70 of this chapter, there appears to be no actual basis for this claim that Easterners are disproportionately represented on the Executive Committee.

Such charges are probably found in every voluntary organization, and it is perhaps encouraging that they were not made more frequently within the AEA.[31] Other interviewees also mentioned the perpetuation in office of certain persons over long periods of time but felt this was largely unintentional and more a result of a poor elections system or of the limited number of well-known persons in the field than a purposeful retention of power.

On balance it would seem that the small proportion of the membership who have any image of the Executive Committee see it as a body which potentially could supply leadership for the association but which has failed to do so in the past. It has also been credited with making some unwise decisions, especially in its dealings with the Fund for Adult Education, and there have been other criticisms made of it which indicate that there is not complete and unanimous trust of this body. Nevertheless, practically no one doubts the need for such a body to operate the affairs of the organization, and the perception of recent improvement in the Committee's operation is a hopeful sign. That a large minority of the interviewees would like to disband the Delegate Assembly or turn over more powers to the Executive Committee may also be considered a measure of growing trust.

Suggested Changes. Only a handful of interviewees had any suggestions to make regarding changes in the operation of the Executive Committee.

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[31] In some instances the heterogeneity of AEA's membership may have played a role in bringing about criticisms of the Committee along these lines. The extensive subsidy of the AEA by the Fund for Adult Education in the early years made possible frequent expense-paid meetings of the Executive Committee in the better hotels. Although the accommodations provided at that time were probably not unusual for some Committee members from industry or the larger universities, educators from the more impoverished branches of the field perhaps found them extravagant and out of place in what they felt was a needy movement.

A few felt that a greater attempt should be made to include such nationally known leaders on the Committee as Bernard Baruch, Eleanor Roosevelt and David Sarnoff. Several others expressed the less ambitious desire to obtain better known educators, such as the presidents of the largest universities, for the Committee. There appeared to be no plan for securing these individuals, however, with the exception of eliminating the election of Committee members on a regional basis, and such suggestions appear to be more expressions of hope than realistic proposals.

Several individuals who had served on the Committee felt that it was too large a body, and they suggested that reducing the number of members would improve its efficiency. From limited observations of this Committee, the authors tend to agree, at least in principle. Such a reduction in size would also make more feasible the carrying out of another suggestion, namely, that the Committee meet more frequently in order to have time to discuss basic policy, for otherwise the cost of Executive Committee meetings would make this financially impossible at the current time. Unfortunately, however, a reduction in the size of the Executive Committee, if accompanied by a simultaneous increase in the power of this body at the expense of the Delegate Assembly, would undoubtedly be interpreted by many as too much concentration of power in the hands of a few, and therefore this otherwise valuable suggestion is perhaps best left unheeded. A reduction in size would also seem especially unwise at the current time when such a large proportion of the Committee members come from only one type of agency, the colleges and universities, for such a reduction would lessen the chances for the representation of other areas of adult education on this body.

The major change which the authors would like to propose for serious consideration has already been mentioned, namely, the shift of some policy making powers from the Delegate Assembly to the Executive Committee.[32] Four reasons for this may be offered.

1. There appears to be a desire on the part of at least some members for more leadership from the Executive Committee. However, so long as the Executive Committee is not responsible for some basic policy and has only an advisory role in this area, it is easier for it to evade basic decisions in this area and concentrate instead on administrative matters as it has done in the past.

2. Because of the current financial difficulties of the association, it is almost imperative that important decisions be made for the association more frequently than the Delegate Assembly is able to meet and with a broader basis of knowledge about the association than is available to most delegates. This means that informally, at least, more power will almost necessarily shift to the Executive Committee. Various members of the Committee have detected this drift already. Therefore it would seem better to admit this officially than to create further confusion and suspicion by maintaining the fiction that the Delegate Assembly makes the policy decisions.

3. Unless some success is reached in the near future in determining what the goals of the AEA are and what it should be doing to achieve these goals, it is likely that the future course of the association will be determined more by financial expediency than by wishes of any of its

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[32] A corresponding shift of certain administrative functions from the Executive Committee to the staff or a steering committee would probably also be necessary, since it seems unlikely that the number or length of the Executive Committee meetings can be increased at present.

members. As several students of the theory of organizations have noted, when an organization's goals are not clear, the future course of the organization tends to become disproportionately shaped by its leaders' concern with its survival and prosperity.[33] This would seem to be especially likely during a financial crisis when the problem of survival becomes most acute. To put the case more concretely, it may be better to have the Executive Committee make its crucial decisions on the basis of consciously made policy about the organization's goals, even if this means that the Committee has to shape these goals by itself, than to make its decisions primarily on the basis of financial considerations without any clear goals against which to evaluate these decisions.

4. Under the current organizational arrangement wherein the Delegate Assembly has the power to make basic policy but few resources to actually do this, while the Executive Committee has more resources but little or no constitutional authority to do so, there appears to be a policy vacuum. It is perhaps because of this situation that in the past the activities of the association have appeared to be especially subject to shifts which were probably not the result of conscious policy. Instead, the activities of the association have seemed to be primarily the result of the giving and then the withdrawing of the grants from the Fund for Adult Education. A clearer idea of what the association is and what it is attempting to do should help in the future to prevent the continual changing of directions as a result of primarily external influences.

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[33] _Cf_. Clark, _op_. _cit_., pp. 146-47.

Chapter IX

THE AEA AND ITS ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

This chapter concerns the complicated questions centering around the relationships of the AEA to other organizations with interests in the field of adult education. The AEA was organized as a generalized agency, as some interviewees put it "as an umbrella" under which persons from all specialized organizations and interests engaged in adult education activities could gather for the consideration of problems common to all. Institutional memberships were also provided for, under which a library or a university department could join, but the individual type of membership was normal and freed officers of national organizations such as the Red Cross or the American Library Association from being considered as officially representing such agencies when attending or speaking at an AEA meeting.

This structure left open the question of formalizing in any way the relationships between the AEA and the types of agencies just mentioned.

The private agencies mentioned are representative of two main types, those whose major purposes and activities are educational in nature and those which of necessity have educational programs as one means of attaining their purposes. The National University Extension Association is another illustration of the first type; the National Association of Manufacturers of the second. The third section of this chapter will deal with AEA relations with organizations of these two types.

In some states and cities councils of adult education have been organized to serve adult educators within the area covered. A few of these are older than the AEA itself. Some have joint memberships with it; some do not. The relations of the AEA to these councils will be considered in the final section of this chapter.

The first half of the chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the relationships of the AEA to two organizations with which it is intimately connected, so intimately, in fact, that many persons look on them as departments of the AEA. The first of these is the Council of National Organizations engaged in adult education, which will be designated as CNO throughout this discussion. The second is the National Association of Public School Adult Educators, almost invariably spoken of as NAPSAE.

AEA-CNO Relations

The CNO was organized specifically to relate the AEA to both types of organizations alluded to above and to enable it to be of service to them. According to the constitution of the AEA, as noted in Chapter III, the CNO is "an organ" of the AEA. This apparently clear-cut statement would seem to be definitive and permit the authors to leave the discussion and pass on to the next point. Unfortunately this is not possible. There are wide differences of opinion among the interviewees as to the functions and status of the CNO and as to its actual and proper relationships to the parent body. The situation has become sufficiently confused so that one-third of the interviewees either declined to answer the question:

What is the relationship of the AEA and the CNO as you see it?

or far more frequently simply said that they did not know. Another 12 per cent said the relationship was "unclear and getting more so." Typical of the responses is this:

> I don't really understand the relationship as it now stands even though I've been on the Executive Committee for years. I'm not sure how parallel our purposes are.

The approximately two-thirds of the interviewees who addressed themselves to the question amply illustrated the brief quotation in the previous sentence. The contradictions and rationalizations of points of view expressed make it unlikely that any one, no matter how detached, would be able to discuss the problems involved to the satisfaction of all of tho concerned. In this connection it should be noted that the disagreements concern even matters of clear fact, as when two important interviewees said categorically, "Financially CNO is not tied to AEA in any way."

At the outset two statements of importance must be emphasized. (1) The functional idea behind the CNO was sound. Neither of the two predecessor organizations of the AEA had succeeded in enlisting very much support from agencies using adult education as one means toward achieving their objectives. The CNO was a device for relating many such organizations to the adult education movement, and the CNO's membership roster shows that real progress has been made in this direction.

(2) As noted in Chapter III, the Founding Assembly of the AEA provided for a decentralization of its activities in four offices. The meagre financial resources of the organization were one reason for this move, since various institutions had donated office space and/or personnel. This necessity was variously rationalized or considered a blessing by many since it would effectively prevent the association from being dominated by one central office, as some felt one of the preceding organizations had been.

Everything that sociologists know about the behavior of social institutions and organizational bureaucracies would lead to the expectation of difficulties in making the agreed upon arrangements for an adequate coordination and unified service to the constituency work smoothly, especially after the expansion of activities. Such an expectation was confirmed in this case as witness the high degree of autonomy the CNO has acquired and some of the resultant tensions. It is important to trace at least some of the influences which brought about this result.

Influences Making for CNO Autonomy. In the first place, a considerable measure of autonomy was inherent in the permissive philosophy of the AEA. Just as adult educators insist that participants in non-credit adult education should be offered what they desire because "they know their needs," the AEA believed that the representatives of the organizations in CNO were in the best position to define the program in terms of their needs which they knew best. Thus, when 73 national organizations founded "The Council of National Organizations of the Adult Education Association of the USA" in February, 1952, it was stated that "although a constitutional organ of the AEA, the Council shall develop its own policies, program and organization and shall determine its operating relationship with the AEA."[1] A Planning Committee was provided for "to make recommendations to the AEA and to the governing body; to carry on the business of the Council between meetings of the governing body . . ."[2] Later an Executive Committee was created. This increasing formalization of CNO operations, coupled with the fact that AEA retained a veto power, led to the peculiar structure where the executive officer has two masters, the chairman of this executive committee and the coordinator, later director, of the parent body, the AEA.

A second unwitting influence was the Fund for Adult Education. The large grants received by the AEA, the new projects made possible as a result, and the attendant increase in staff at the Chicago office, resulted in an inevitable lessening of interest in CNO activities in which the Chicago staff had no share and learned of briefly only at occasional meetings of the entire staff. For the same reason and also because few, if any, of them had any experience with the type of organizations in the CNO membership, such suggestions as the Chicago staff made with respect to CNO policy or activities sometimes appeared unrealistic to CNO officers. Because of the Fund for Adult Education grants, CNO had enough money so that the issue of the relationships between AEA and CNO did not arise in acute form until the drastic curtailment of funds.

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[1] Adult Education, vol. II, no. 4, April, 1952.

[2] Ibid.

In the third place, as "an organ" of the AEA, that organization retained, as already noted, a veto power over CNO procedures since, as a coordinating agency, it had to regard the needs of the whole adult education movement. Because of the two considerations already mentioned and also because CNO policies were either approved or aroused no opposition, no attempt to use this veto power was made until recently. This had the effect of making the CNO appear even more autonomous than by a strict interpretation it legally was. This autonomy appears to have been stressed in soliciting organizations as members.

Regardless of either the constitution of the AEA or the attitudes of its members, a viable AEA-CNO relationship which will perform satisfactorily the services CNO members require and strengthen adult education as a whole should be worked out within the financial resources available. This could well mean compromises with what some might consider the ideal situation. It is understandable that many CNO members, as large and powerful organizations, would be loathe to accept what they interpreted as dictation from the AEA. It is, however, unfortunately true that in some of the largest and most powerful, adult education occupies a marginal position. These organizations, in theory, at least, are amply able to achieve complete autonomy by paying the bill. This, as of the moment of writing, they have not done. Unless CNO member organizations can underwrite its budget, the present situation justifies the use of the word compromise above.

Interviewee Opinions Differ. In order to realize the degree to which there is confusion with respect to the AEA-CNO relationship and the difficulties involved in reappraisal, it may be well to summarize the remarks of the interviewees who commented on the problem, since these illustrate the points of view that must be taken into account in any effort to increase the productivity of either the AEA or the CNO.

Over one-fourth of those expressing an opinion took the ground that the CNO was a part, section or department of the AEA, highly important but subordinate. All previous presidents of the AEA and all presidents of the CNO interviewed took this position, but there were important differences between these two groups on the degree of autonomy accorded or to be accorded the CNO. But the agreement was complete that, as one CNO ex-president said: "The CNO is unqualifiedly a part of the AEA." In view of the unanimity of this testimony it is not easy to understand those who remarked that they were "shocked" by any suggestion "that the CNO could be considered just a part of the AEA." It should be quite clear from the foregoing that constitutionally and in fact the CNO's relation to the AEA is on a different plane from that of a section.

One-fifth of the interviewees with opinions on this subject indicated that the present situation is "about right" but unfortunately disagreed as to what is the present situation even, as already pointed out, on matters of easily ascertainable fact.

The extremes of disagreement were reached by two groups, each with one-tenth of the respondents, one of which said that the CNO should be independent, autonomous and, added half of this group, self-supporting; and the other that the CNO was unnecessary and should never have been organized. The latter were largely interviewees with little or no direct experience with CNO. The former were largely, but not exclusively, representatives of CNO members.

Questions of Program and Function. It is very important to recognize that whatever the differences of opinion about the CNO as at present constituted and operating, there is general agreement that the functions it was set up to perform are essential. The one exception among the interviewees was the person who asserted that the money appropriated to CNO over the years would have done adult education more good if spent on field service and the organization of adult education councils. Not surprisingly, this person was a council officer. Some persons would, however, limit CNO's functions or service to organizations whose primary purpose is education, such as the National University Extension Association, or would separate, perhaps through a departmental organization, service to such bodies and to those like the National Foundation, the National Association of Manufacturers, Chamber of Commerce of the United States, or others using education as one technique to further their objectives.

One of the early and strong proponents of the CNO, however, raised a fundamental question, namely:

> Is the CNO with its present large degree of autonomy actually functioning for the good of the field of adult education?

The answer to this query must, of course, come from those concerned. There are, however, certain guide posts. The need to perform the functions assigned to the CNO is not disputed. The AEA brought the CNO into existence to fill this need. "It was a device to inform organizations with respect to adult education and hopefully to help give status to their educational officers." It made no effort to dictate programs or procedures. Many leaders look hopefully to the voluntary organizations as being an as yet untapped resource in the development of adult education which could be better utilized because of CNO. One, for instance, while alluding to the agencies of industry and labor, emphasized the special potential of the churches.

In attacking the problem of what policies would better realize the potentials, it is important to recognize that because of the high degree of autonomy allowed the CNO from its inception, there cannot be a sudden use of the constitutional power by the AEA, at least not without serious repercussions. This situation that has arisen is not unusual. The formal and constitutional provisions governing the CNO as an "organ" of the AEA have remained constant. However, for a variety of reasons, by informal and unofficial processes another arrangement has developed, one permitting very great autonomy for CNO. The existence of this functional or operational situation within the context of the legal situation is doubtless largely responsible for the high degree of confusion with respect to AEA-CNO relations which has been documented earlier in this chapter.

It is important also to state that, with the exception noted below, all interviewees who were or had been actively involved in the CNO as representatives of their organizations felt that they had benefited to some degree by the association. At this point several questions may be raised: Does the information received by these representatives flow or even trickle through the organizational hierarchies to which they belong? Do these representatives in fact possess any power to help adult education or the AEA, and if so, do they use it? Is there a steady flow of new information as to adult education techniques, methods and pertinent developments to these representatives through the CNO, or put another way, does the expected interaction between the member agencies of the CNO and the adult education movement in fact occur?

Interviewees were not asked specifically as to the achievements, problems and weaknesses of the CNO as they were with respect to the AEA. However, three adult educators in two very important and well financed but quite different organizations belonging to CNO were interviewed. Two of these persons did not know there was an AEA. The other thought he had heard of it. Neither organization found the CNO program met their particular needs, though up to the time of the interview both were members. All three persons had expected more of the type of assistance that might flow from a generalized coordinating agency. Both had moved to secure adequate professional adult education advice independently, one at considerable expense. This testimony suggests that the CNO is serving other functions than coordinating organizations for the AEA. It may also mean that there is validity to the proposal that the CNO recognize that it has at least two major types of organizations on its roster and that they need different services. There is already an Inter-Association Conference within the CNO made up of the more academically minded organizations.

Some interviewees pointed out that there was inadequate communication between agency representatives and other adult educators. The provision that the presidents of the AEA and CNO sit on one another's boards is insufficient to accomplish the hoped for coordination. A minimum of three persons was suggested, though it must be recognized that the AEA board is already quite large. Its meetings are already a heavy drain on its resources.

Also worth considering is the proposal that there be one CNO representative on all important, substantive or operational AEA committees and vice versa.

The real logic behind this idea is the fact that as at present operating, persons of experience in the AEA have no regularized way of making any contribution to CNO members, nor can the organizational representative share their practical experience with the professionals and volunteers in the AEA. There is no question but that this inter-change was orginally intended both by the AEA and the CNO. The report of the first annual conference of the latter lists such actions, or rather recommendations "to ourselves as participating organizations in CNO" as:

> that participating organizations encourage their local constituents to participate in local councils or groups concerned with adult education; or if none exists, to encourage their formation;
>
> that each organization, where it is not already doing so, keep its local groups continuously informed about the purpose and the program of CNO *and the parent organization's part in it* (italics authors');
>
> that organizations urge their local constituents to make full use of Adult Education Association publications;
>
> that organizations, where they are not already doing so, urge local constituents to become familiar with other groups concerned with adult education in their communities.[3]

One explanation for the partial failure continuously to implement these recommendations was offered by one CNO ex-president:

> With only one CNO representative on the AEA Executive Committee, you get caught up in the business of organization, of mechanics and financial problems, and you let substance go by the board. The AEA has not accomplished its goal of letting us know about each other. We should ask, "What do we know about what the Department of Agriculture is doing in training? or what are the universities doing and what have they to offer?"

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[3] *Adult Education*, vol. III, no. 3, Feb. 1953.

One reiterated comment by interviewees and sometimes by respondents to the questionnaire is pertinent here, namely, the desire for better integration of annual meetings. With CNO, NAPSAE and AEA all having separate meetings, anyone interested in several areas of adult education must spend about a week, counting travel time, to attend all three. Many people have neither the time nor the resources to do this.[4] It was pointed out that many adult education problems are common to members of all of these groups and that while obviously each will need separate sessions for its particular problems, coordinated program planning would be a large service to many workers and would probably improve the attendance of the membership of all groups and reduce the total meeting time.

A few interviewees suggested the need for even greater autonomy for the CNO on the ground that many of its members were large organizations and would not permit their employees to represent them in an organization their kind of agency did not control. One of the strongest state adult education associations, however, has its own version of the CNO but serving effectively as a council committee. Its officers agree that there is useful cross-fertilization within the council in this way which would be lost by a more formalized organization. In Canada objectives somewhat comparable to those of the CNO, though perhaps broader, are very successfully pursued by a Joint Planning Commission which, as this title indicates, remained an integral part of the Canadian Association for Adult Education.

One suggestion made several times by interviewees to meet this problem was that the AEA should adopt a bicameral form of organization, with the present CNO serving as the "senate" and the AEA as an individual membership body as the "house." This idea, according to several interviewees who attended, received considerable support at the week's workshop-conference preceding the Founding Assembly. It was pointed out that the American Medical Association and a few religious denominations have this type of organization. Because of the elaborate internal structure of the AEA and because NAPSAE, while a member of CNO, is coordinate with it, the authors would not recommend this further complication of democratic machinery.

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[4] One interviewee showed his expense account. He was a member of the AEA Delegate Assembly, of a NAPSAE committee, and had a CNO relationship. The Cincinnati meetings were costing him eight days in time and almost $50.00 above the travel allowance and per diem allowed by his university.

Regardless of the constitution, of the excellent intentions of the Founding Assembly, and of the sincere and ironic statements of purposes as various leaders understood them, the fact remains that there never was a clear-cut, proper definition of the relationship of the CNO to the body that created it. This lack of definition plus the decentralization of offices, or at least lack of coordination, has resulted in the misunderstandings and confusion already noted, and many interviewees believe, in complicating struggles for status and power on the part of a minority of those concerned.

Whether this belief can be proven is relatively unimportant. What is important is the increasing proportion of AEA members and agency representatives who are concerned over what seems to them to be a failure of the plans of the Founding Assembly. Several interviewees gave illustrations of the value both AEA and CNO had been to them as individuals and as officers of their organizations, but added comments such as the following:

> As a member of CNO's Executive Committee, I wish to hell they'd stop talking about which group is smarter and start working together.

The authors believe that a recognition not merely of the stated AEA-CNO relationship and of the realistic situation with respect to the latter's autonomy, but much more important, of the complementary and interdependent nature of the relationship is essential. Beyond that, it appears that the suggestions already mentioned and arising from members of these bodies, and from such formal actions as those quoted above, have merit and should serve as a basis for discussion. The financial situation in which both find themselves is precarious. This should be an incentive to seek the best possible solution in terms of the needs of the adult education field.

AEA and NAPSAE

The relation between the Adult Education Association and the National Association of Public School Adult Educators, organized in 1952, presents a situation somewhat similar to that just discussed, but with significant differences. It will be recalled that the AEA was formed as a wholly new organization by persons who had previously belonged either to the American Association for Adult Education or to the Department of Adult Education of the National Education Association, or both. It is also important to remember that after the organization of the American Association for Adult Education, the Department of Adult Education opened its membership to all persons concerned with adult education, whether in public schools or not. The liquidation of these two organizations and creation of the AEA were honest efforts to reduce competition and overlapping within the adult education field. The organization of NAPSAE so soon after school adult educators had apparently been brought into the main stream of adult education activity was a severe blow to many of those who had helped in the consummation of the new body.

It is understandable, therefore, that emotions were aroused and that harsh words were and are used by some persons on both sides of the issue as to whether or not the organization of NAPSAE was justified. In order to understand what AEA-NAPSAE relationships are and might become, it is necessary to review briefly the background in part because, as in the case of the CNO, there is some misunderstanding even among persons of importance in adult education as to just what the situation is and how it came about. Before doing so, however, it is essential to note certain facts.

1. The discussions leading up to the Founding Assembly and subsequently recognized that public school adult educators, like other highly specific groups, had some interests and problems peculiar to their institutions. It was anticipated that there would be a section or division through which such special interests could be considered. One proposal was for a council of public school adult education administrators comparable to CNO. The AEA constitution provided for "such sub-organizations composed of members of occupational interests, or geographical groups within the Association as the Delegate Assembly may approve." NAPSAE was so authorized in late 1951.

2. Whereas before the founding of the AEA, the National Education Association's Department of Adult Education enrolled any one interested, NAPSAE membership is open, as its name indicates, only to adult educators in public school systems.[5] Though the National Education Association continues to operate a Department of Adult Education, it is not a membership body and functions only as a service agency.

3. The president of NAPSAE is by virtue of this office a member of the AEA Board, and its secretary continues to perform some staff functions.

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[5] It is reported that a change in the constitution of NAPSAE now somewhat broadens the membership base. This apparently increases the chance of competition.

Coordination of the AEA and NAPSAE is also assisted unofficially by the fact that approximately 16 per cent of the latter's members were also members of AEA in October, 1958, comprising 6 per cent of the AEA membership.

Even more important is the fact that in 1958 21 per cent of the delegates elected from the states to the Delegate Assembly of the AEA, or 20 per cent of all delegates when the "at-large" delegates were counted, were members of NAPSAE. They are even more represented among the alternates, where they make up 29 per cent of the delegates from the states. This aspect of the relationships was discussed in the previous chapter.

Despite this happy situation there is some misunderstanding even among the interviewees as to the status and role of NAPSAE in the AEA, as well as to their relationships. Interviewers were told that the organization of NAPSAE was a mistake and broke agreements, that it was wholly independent of the AEA, that it was an autonomous but affiliated unit, that it was a branch of the AEA, that it was coordinate and cooperating with the AEA "as two cogs mesh together," that it competed with it, and by approximately equal numbers of interviewees that the AEA-NAPSAE relationships were "about right," "disappointing" or "must still be worked out."

Reasons for Organization of NAPSAE. It seems quite clear that within less than a year after the AEA was born public school adult educators became convinced that they were not getting enough out of it and began to agitate for an organization of their own but one affiliated with the AEA. Indeed, one ex-president of NAPSAE defined the organization as a section of AEA, a description denied by others. In fact, after organization NAPSAE sought official "affiliation" with the AEA which the AEA's Delegate Assembly promptly voted. To an outsider the need for formalized affiliation after there had been authorization to organize may be confusing. Since NAPSAE also sought, and after two years received, affiliation with the National Education Association, presumably the step puts its relations with both bodies on a comparable basis.

Some interviewees in and out of NAPSAE offered specifics as to the reasons for its organization and for the "dissatisfaction" of public school adult educators with AEA. For one thing there had been a change in the top leadership of the National Education Association, and the new chief officer became concerned over what seemed an anomalous position of adult education within the National Education Association--namely, a service division without a dues paying membership, staffed by persons drawing their salaries from the National Education Association but responsible in part to another organization (the AEA) and rendering service to it.

Again, some public school adult educators, especially state officers and local principals or directors, felt that the arrangements entered into by the founding assembly represented "a surrender of the position of leadership in adult education" which they believed was held by the schools, a "surrender" they were not willing to make. Indeed, reportedly it seems to have come as a surprise to a few of this group that others than schools were active in adult education, a misconception which an active local or perhaps even state association of adult education could have prevented.

Further, there was considerable criticism of the publications and meetings of the AEA as "too highbrow," "too theoretical and philosophical," "too dominated by professors" or by non-school voluntary agencies.

Some comments on these points follow:[6]

> Everything is written for university or agricultural extension.
>
> - - - - - -
>
> [Publications] are the funniest damn things. You wonder what they're about.
>
> - - - - - -
>
> I feel more related to NAPSAE than the AEA. I look to them for specifics, for help. The AEA is interesting but for problems I'd rather talk to some one from NAPSAE.
>
> - - - - - -
>
> AEA is too diverse. There are no common bonds, no real coordination. It's unwieldy.
>
> - - - - - -
>
> I don't feel as significant in an AEA meeting as in NAPSAE because of all the smart college professors and because so many folks are not doing the same kind of things I am. You want to talk shop all the time and you just don't talk shop in general meetings.

Finally, there was no cordiality among most of the school men toward "the group dynamics crowd" which was accused of dominating the AEA and of promoting this particular ideology as the be-all and end-all of adult education.

> The group dynamics clique is trying to run the AEA and Adult Leadership, . . . unrealistic, ivory tower, no understanding of people and communities.

"NAPSAE," said one former high AEA officer, "was created to prevent a rebellion within the AEA but we haven't been able to contain it." An ex-president of AEA testified, "Forming NAPSAE may have been a mistake but when it happened there was no power that could possibly have prevented it."

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[6] By design some of these comments are taken from interviewers' reports of a joint AEA-NAPSAE study in 1954.

That it was a mistake a surprising number of school men are now ready to declare, as the following quotations, all from school men among our interviewees, show.

> NAPSAE should never have been organized except as a section of the AEA as originally provided for, or there should be joint memberships. School people need the broader contacts with other adult educators.

> School adult educators have no philosophy except to promote the school as the adult education agency. We've become too provincial.

> The public school adult educator is first and always a mechanic. He's always interested in the number of courses offered and the number of people in them. He's not interested in philosophy, probably because he wasn't trained in adult education. He is not aware of better procedures or studies elsewhere. The thing that bothers me is that too few stay on to AEA meetings and get to know others in the AEA from universities, unions, etc. If they did, and we could find some common ground, we could make progress.

An interviewee who gives unstinting cooperation to the teacher and leadership training program of the Adult Education division of his State Board of Education summed up the situation as follows:

> NAPSAE does give help on specifics. But we keep going over the same topics again and again, why people aren't attending, problems of drop-outs, etc. Poole was talking about such things in 1800. We can't expect progress if we stay at one place.

These last two series of quotations are negative and highly critical, the one of the AEA, the other of NAPSAE. All this means is that neither organization is meeting to the full the expectations of all of those interested. In each case it appears to be a minority that is critical, but consideration of criticism is always in order when policy is under discussion.

It should also be indicated that in some states and cities public school adult educators cooperate with and are members of local or state adult education councils. In other situations this is not the case, and it seemed obvious to the authors that the attitudes of some interviewees toward NAPSAE were influenced by local situations.

NAPSAE is an Autonomous Group. Regardless of the fact that the NAPSAE budget was reported in 1958 as an item of the total AEA budget, this organization is autonomous to a very considerable degree. It also has a very high degree of autonomy within the National Education Association. One evidence of this is the fact that only 29 per cent of the members of NAPSAE are members of the National Education Association, the second lowest proportion among all the departments and affiliated groups within this body.

In a few cases where school adult educators were not close to the rest of the movement, the losses were not theoretical. Public school adult education in these states became a target for legislative economy. The lack of free and constant communication between the school people and all other adult educators reportedly lost precious time in organizing general support for the adult education program and contributed to the loss of appropriations. One interviewee quoted a state adult education school officer as saying in an open meeting that "the cut in our adult education budget is the fault of the school people themselves." Several other interviewees indicated that quite apart from other and higher motives, it would be advantageous from purely selfish reasons for school adult educators and their organizations to establish close ties with the whole adult education movement.

The fact of the matter is that the complete integration of public education with other elements in the adult education field, as planned for at the Founding Assembly, does not exist.

Public School Adult Education Has Special Problems. It must be recognized in any consideration of this situation that schools in the aggregate probably do more adult education than any other agency. Their tax-supported status, their high proportion of credit work, especially in some localities, their difficulties, again only in some areas, of operating under a legal structure that never envisaged adult education, give public school adult educators problems not shared with most other workers in the field. The necessity to provide a means for the consideration of areas of interests was recognized by the Founding Assembly. The public school adult educators have chosen to meet their peculiar needs differently from that which the original constitution proposed, but some mechanism so to do was essential.

Coordination is Possible. On the other hand, machinery for coordination has been preserved. The relationships are closer and more cordial than they were between the old American Association for Adult Education and the Department of Adult Education of the National Education Association. Some of the criticism of the organization of NAPSAE stemmed from the fear that this meant a repetition of the American Association for Adult Education-Department of Adult Education difficulties. This has not happened and was guarded against. It is unlikely that the complete integration envisioned in 1951 can be restored, especially since NAPSAE has now received foundation grants directly and not through the AEA, as would be logical if it were a sub-organization or affiliate. On the other hand, the testimony presented above shows that while there is a place for NAPSAE in dealing with the problems of public school adult education, it does not and perhaps cannot meet all the needs recognized by important public school adult educators.

One evidence of this is the not inconsiderable number of public school adult educators who belong to the AEA and not to NAPSAE. Particularly with the recent increased demand for more non-credit and non-vocational courses, the schools are encountering situations more comparable to those in other areas of adult education than ever before. Both public school adult education and adult education as a whole will be weaker without increased cooperation.

The AEA and Other Adult Education Organizations

The discussion of AEA relations with the CNO and NAPSAE is in a sense a consideration of intrafamily problems, since both of these organizations sprang directly from the AEA and have formal ties to it. But there are a number of national organizations concerned with specific aspects of adult education, some of which are older than either of the organizations which preceded and merged into the AEA. Among these are the American Library Association, the American Vocational Association, the National University Extension Association, the Association of University Evening Colleges. Any generalized national adult education association would need to define its relations with these and certain other agencies.

Age of Agencies a Factor in Relationships. The factor of the age of the various adult education agencies is one of great importance. In the years prior to the organization of the AEA or either of its predecessor agencies a number of these, including most of those mentioned above, had established their policies and programs and also their administrative routines. They saw no need to step aside for an untried newcomer, and some officers resented the implication in the organization of the American Association for Adult Education that their interests and programs were narrow. Several interviewees urged that the AEA might well pattern its organization after that of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a suggestion which will be discussed in a later chapter. Here it should simply be noted that the American Association for the Advancement of Science came before and had existed for a number of years before any except a few state and local academies of its present 290 affiliated organizations came into being. It had already acquired prestige. Affiliation with it presented advantages, and it could lay down the conditions of affiliation. It, like the preceding organization to the National Conference on Social Welfare, held the only national gathering in its field. The AEA is hardly in such a position.

An illustration closer home is the Canadian Association for Adult Education. It is in the happy position of being the adult education organization in Canada. There is no equivalent for the National University Extension Association in the United States. Thus the Canadian Association issued the study, Adult Education in the Canadian University, conducted and written by its director. Public school adult educators are members and have not felt the need of a Canadian equivalent of NAPSAE.

Two Illustrative Cases. Adult education organizations of the type under discussion are to a considerable degree administrative and/or service agencies. The development of the National University Extension Association is illustrative. Initially it was largely a group of deans and directors of university extension. In more recent years university extension itself has expanded and the advantages of conference among persons with responsibilities in some of the newer areas of activity became clear. Five divisions were therefore created: evening colleges and class extension, correspondence study, audio-visual communication and community development. An indication of the development both of adult education and of a sense of responsibility with respect to it among institutions of higher learning is the opening in 1958 of a new class of membership in the National University Extension Association. Private or smaller state colleges which do not operate more than two of the usual activities common in the extension field are eligible as associate members at lower dues than full members but with no vote on policy matters. The names of the divisions noted above make quite clear the service and administrative concerns of the organization.

The American Library Association is of a different type. Adult education is a relatively recent concern of libraries, just as there has been a specialized development for children in large organizations under a children's librarian. Thus a library may cooperate in making books available to special adult study groups. It is a short step from such service to sponsoring and/or housing a Great Books group. Regardless of the special responsibility of any given librarian, all of them have common problems dealing with the acquisition and care of books, principles of selection, methods of operation, budgeting and finance, and many other specifics which are part of what has come to be known as library science and which are among the major concerns both of library schools and of the American Library Association.

These two illustrations should illumine some of the potential problems of relationship between the AEA and organizations such as those mentioned. Organizational membership through the CNO gives little or no help to individuals. But, as one librarian interviewee put it:

> The AEA can't tell an adult service librarian how to run her job but the AEA can help her to a philosophy of adult education, can broaden her vision of what adult education is, can bring her suggestive ideas and materials from other fields.

The first allegiance of a librarian must obviously be to the American Library Association and to its Adult Services Division. Thus approximately only 9 per cent of librarians affiliated with the Adult Services Division of the American Library Association appear to be members of the AEA. These in October 1958 made up 2 per cent of the AEA members. Interestingly enough, over 20 per cent of the librarians who belong to the AEA do not indicate that they are members of the American Library Association, and presumably most of them are not.

The National University Extension Association group is in a somewhat comparable situation. One university has paid for AEA membership for all full-time staff members, but when queried, most of these persons stated that if this policy were abandoned they could not afford to join personally. A group interview with sixteen deans or directors of extension disclosed the fact that only a few could charge their AEA memberships to their university budgets. Most were general members and had joined on a personal basis. One director had a special staff meeting to report on an AEA annual conference, which done, he outlined the benefits of AEA membership and asked his staff to join. None did. The membership statistics bear out this testimony. Over one-third of deans and directors of university extension were members of the AEA at the time of this study, but only 7 per cent of other university extension personnel.[7]

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[7] This latter percentage is based on a sample, the former on a complete count.

What this means, of course, is that while there can be mutually advantageous interaction and cooperation between the AEA and a number of organizations similar to the two described, the individual who must pay for his own memberships to professional societies will usually join the one central to his work and as a matter of economy will seldom go beyond that. There is, of course, the contrary pattern just noted for the librarians and especially noticeable with public school adult educators, where a minority of a group are found in the AEA but not in their presumed primary professional organization.

The study made an effort to discover whether AEA members were conscious of competing organizational interests in adult education by asking each respondent whether he belonged to any other national organization concerned with adult education, and if so, whether it or the AEA was the more valuable to him. Only two-fifths of the respondents indicated dual membership. Of these 44 per cent stated that the AEA was more valuable or equally valuable in comparison with the other organization.

The attitude of the group of university extension officers was very cordial to the AEA. There was general agreement that if it failed to survive, it would be necessary to form a new generalized national organization "especially for upper level persons in all groups having to do with adult education. These persons, through such a generalized national agency as the AEA, get a needed sense of being allied to all other adult educators working on numerous problems common to all sectors of the field."[8]

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[8] The agreement on this point is important since this group interview also uncovered some of the most cogent and constructive criticisms of the AEA, discussed elsewhere in this report.

Suggested Relationships. It is significant, however, that the value of the AEA to university extension was seen in its broad service to "upper level" personnel. "The AEA must recognize that it is and can never be anything else but a secondary organization." This would seem to indicate a cordial and cooperative relationship but also to preclude such a body as the National University Extension Association becoming a section of the AEA or even an affiliated organization in the sense that NAPSAE is. This idea was advanced hopefully by a number of interviewees, though with two exceptions they were not university people.

Indeed, about one-third of the interviewees, or half those who commented on this point, would agree to some such composite statement as the following with reference to AEA relations to other national but specialized adult education bodies:

> These bodies should be related to the AEA in some organic way such as having regular delegates to the Delegate Assembly or possibly an officer on the Executive Committee so that all would think in terms of the whole field, move unitedly in matters of common concern,[9] share in research findings pertinent to the whole field which each agency would apply to its own job, and cooperate in the development of general principles and theory.

A number of interviewees called the AEA an umbrella organization and a few, including one university professor of adult education with close contact with university extension, hoped for an eventual joint membership between the AEA and some of its sister organizations.

But this to others who commented appeared a counsel of perfection. A former AEA president spoke for the point of view of this fourth of those commenting:

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[9] As for instance with respect to the place of adult education in UNESCO.

> You have to depend on individual memberships to represent the entire field. . . . No power on earth can force groups like university or agricultural extension into an organizational relationship with the AEA. They have too long and proud a tradition. To see how far you have to go, the National University Extension Association and the Association of University Evening Colleges will have to come together first before either would join with the AEA.

More cynically another interviewee expressed the judgement that:

> Those with one foot in the AEA and the other in another organization want to see closer relationships, but many of those not in the AEA look askance at its heterogeneous character.

Persons of importance in the National University Extension Association played roles of some significance in the planning that finally eventuated in the founding of the AEA. At that time it was hoped that the desiderata expressed in the composite statement given above could be achieved through membership in the CNO, of which the National University Extension Association has always been a member. However, a majority of the sixteen deans and directors of extension who participated in the group interview felt that the CNO had not achieved its potential.

There are, of course, a number of national organizations concerned with adult education other than the two used as the principal illustrations of the problem of AEA relationships with such bodies. These two were chosen because their relations with the AEA and the preceding American Association for Adult Education have been friendly and cooperative and over a longer span of years than would be possible for some of the others. But even so, there are problems, especially of enlisting the membership of these groups in a secondary organization like the AEA. These problems are similar with all the agencies in this group.

This is not to say that relations between the AEA and the others have been less friendly. An interviewee who has worked long and closely with the Association of University Evening Colleges, for instance, said:

> They are not competitors [AEA and other organizations] but more could have been done. . . . AEA's membership is much broader--the distinctive functions are in terms of publications and conferences providing opportunity for people from different fields to see and hear others. Each organization does a much better job of dealing with [its] central adult education concerns, but none of them give the opportunity to compare notes. AEA should have the device for posing groups with some national problem . . . involving a number of people from different organizations.

Here again there is the emphasis on the need for a national organization to tackle problems that affect all adult education, that are broader than any of the specialized agencies and that may receive little or no attention unless such an organization becomes concerned with them. So far as the leaders of these groups go, this appears to be a mandate they are ready to give a generalized national adult education organization, but if the illustration given above of the failure of one director to recruit AEA members from his staff is typical, they offer no assured basis for financing the program they appear eager to have.

AEA and State and Local Associations

A final area of relationships to be discussed is that between the AEA and generalized adult education organizations operating within a given geographic area and usually called either associations or councils of adult education. Typically these cover a state, but there are three regional councils. About thirty states have some type of organization, a few only provisional. NAPSAE also has some state units and is promoting more. Though completely independent of any control by the AEA, these associations are comparable to subunits of the national organization in that the aims, and to some extent the problems, of both local and national organizations are similar.

Possible Relationships. There appear to be three possible relationships between the AEA and state and local adult education organizations. The AEA could serve solely as a resource agency to be called upon as needed. This is favored by 31 per cent of the respondents to the questionnaire. In addition to this the AEA could attempt to guide local organizations by offering suggestions and special support for specific programs. This policy is the choice of 45 per cent of the respondents. Finally, less than national associations could become branches of the AEA directed by it. Ten per cent favor this. The balance expressed no opinion or in a few cases suggested other procedures.

When the data on this point were analyzed by organizational affiliation, ideological position and region, in all cases the order of preference among these alternatives remained the same. There were only two significant variations. The proportion favoring a branch type of organization rose to 20 per cent or slightly above among the relatively few members whose primary organizational affiliations were with civic, fraternal or labor agencies, or who agreed strongly with the statement that social action for social change was a basic objective of adult education. This was better than twice the proportion for all members.

One additional and significant comparison may be made. This shows that the greater degree of involvement within the AEA, the greater the desire to confine its relations to state and local associations to a passive resource role. Adding the choices of branch and guidance roles together, the proportion favoring active and passive roles according to the degree of involvement in the AEA is given in Table 77.

Table 77: Type of Relationship Preferred Between AEA and Local Councils by Involvement in the AEA*

	Involvement				
				No position in AEA	
Preferred type of relationship	Exec. Comm.	Dele. Assem.	Other comm.	Attended conference	Never attended conference
Active role	41%	58%	58%	61%	64%
Passive role	48	39	36	36	35
Other	11	33	6	3	1
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(48)	(156)	(72)	(306)	(1169)

It would appear that the thinking of the Executive Committee on this point is clearly out of line with that of the other members of the AEA. This may have been because these leaders did not believe that under a restricted budget funds should be spent for giving greater assistance to local associations. It may be that control by such associations or the eventual turning of the AEA into a federation was feared. Whatever the explanation, and it does not emerge from the interviews, the fact may be one explanation of the degree of dissatisfaction with the AEA recorded by the questionnaire respondents.

Some Field Service Desired. It is quite clear, therefore, that with one or two exceptions, no matter under what categories the AEA member respondents to the questionnaire are distributed, about two-thirds favor more than a passive willingness to assist local associations, even though support for a branch organization is meagre. Assistance and guidance, but not control, are preferred, although the majority for a more active role is clear. It is important, therefore, to explore the matter of national, state and local association relationships from the point of view of the interviewees.

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*Those who did not answer the question concerning the preferred type of relationship are excluded from this table.

Interviewees Favor National-State-Local Cooperation. The interviewees were all but unanimous on the desirability of close cooperation between the AEA and any associations or councils that may exist, but the terms of the cooperation produced differences of opinion. About one in five of the interviewees argued for keeping plans flexible and for granting complete autonomy to associations or councils on whatever geographic level. More than one in four favored a chapter or branch organization, but the majority opposed this as depriving the local organization of autonomy. It was pointed out that a few of the state and local associations were older than the AEA and highly self-conscious. Joint memberships and dues were favored by over half of the interviewees. This would not limit the independence of the subsidiary units. The analogy of the American Farm Bureau Federation and of the National Education Association was used by several persons. State units of these organizations may reportedly vote against policies adopted by the national body and are not bound by them in the conduct of their own affairs. The AEA currently has an optional joint membership plan which fifteen councils have adopted. Interestingly, the experience with this plan is not conclusive.[10]

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[10] One interviewee explained this on the basis of the efficiency of the local secretary and the national office in processing memberships, and charged that the three months' delay in his state organization had seriously hurt both it and the AEA.

A former president was quite emphatic with respect to regional, state or local associations.

> There should be state organizations containing representation of all major adult education forces, including membership of voluntary agencies. They could train leaders, improve administrative practice, hold workshops, etc. They should be autonomous but their leaders should attend the national meetings.

A number of interviewees who had participated in or studied the Mountain-Plains regional project and the regional association strongly favored more experiments of this kind for training persons to work together both in the community and through organizational cooperation, and also training them in the discovery and use of local and state resources in personnel and institutions.

A long-time friend and close observer of the AEA who, however, has never held office remarked:

> The AEA developed from the top down rather than the bottom up. It has therefore tended to become more concerned with its own functions and persistence than with promoting adult education at the local level. The Fund for Adult Education more or less forced this pattern of development. There was nothing wrong with the projects they wanted but if staff could have been made available at the local level, the AEA could have been built from the bottom up on a strong foundation. The best thing the AEA ever did was the Rocky Mountain project but they had money only for one year. The AEA had always had a remoteness from local people that would not have developed if it had grown from the bottom up.

Pros and Cons of State Associations. State associations, it is felt by some interviewees, would be one way to overcome the difficulty first noted. Several gave the formation of a state association and the joint membership plan as one of the significant achievements of the AEA. Such state associations, at least for a while, often require and receive the assistance of an existing institution such as a university which will permit one of its staff to serve as executive secretary. Several interviewees recommended this procedure, which has proved satisfactory in some situations. In one case, however, a successful state association so assisted collapsed when the university withdrew its cooperation because of opposition from a sister institution.

State associations must needs consider their situation with care. Low density of population raises difficulties. A state with a large area must face the problem of the expense of travel to meetings. When a large area is combined with low population density, problems multiply. In the deep South, state associations have to face the problems of the attendance at meetings of both Negroes and whites.

Some interviewees sounded a note of caution on other grounds, especially against organizing locals just to have an organization.

> If the development of state and local organizations is part of a plan to do something when the structure is created, then it is sound. If it is just for getting people to support the AEA, it is hollow. First a need for a structure must be demonstrated. People get tired of going to meetings to think about how to raise money for the AEA. We need quality programming and we don't have it.

Another interviewee would confirm this from experience:

> I doubt if there'd be any advantage in having a national AEA writ small in my state. Our regional meetings are not worth much and they have even worse communication than the AEA.

These last comments are important. There is no virtue in organization for organization's sake, and even less with organizations which at the state and local levels are attempting to do the same things that the AEA is trying to accomplish. This has happened too often and, according to one interviewee, is one factor in the demise of close to half of the state and local associations which have been organized. Problems of the definition both of adult education and of functions at different levels of operation emerge here. The failure to solve them has resulted in unwitting and often unrecognized competition among organizations at these various levels.

The initial action of the AEA by the Delegate Assembly stated:

> In order to root the AEA firmly in the soil of local, state and regional organizations of adult education workers, the Association will encourage such organizations to develop and establish continuing communication and cooperation with the AEA.[11]

Two years later the "legislative committee on program" voted to propose "that the AEA devote its efforts to a program of serving the following aims: . . .

"3. Energizing local community planning for adult education and improving the machinery for making national resources available to local communities; in particular strengthening two of the most promising areas of institutional development--the public schools and national organizations."

The authors were not able to find elsewhere in this report on "Actions of the Delegate Assembly" in Adult Leadership for November, 1953, any indication as to what action, if any, the Delegate Assembly took on this proposal. Presumably since it appears under the caption given just above, the proposal was adopted. If so, it raises the question of just how strengthening these institutions, especially the national ones, would energize local community planning.

The 1955 Delegate Assembly was chiefly concerned with what apparently became the joint membership plan and with the relation of "local councils" to community chests.[12] Such actions go only a very small way along the line of majority thinking on this point in 1959.

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[11] Adult Education, December, 1951, p. 44.

Grass Roots Organization Can Be Important. There is a great deal of experience and some research to show that national organizations built from the ground up have achieved considerable strength thereby. A conspicuous example is the American Farm Bureau Federation. The local farm bureaus came first, and many of the state federations had been organized before the national was formed, yet it is today the most powerful farm organization in the nation. Where, as with certain government sponsored cooperatives in the early 1930's, the regional or national body was formed first, local organization in some cases became a sine qua non of survival. In quite another sphere the American Philatelic Society is strongest proportionately in those cities which have affiliated stamp clubs. The National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the Federation of Women's Clubs, Rotary International, the United States Chamber of Commerce, and many others would have little meaning without the constant flow of suggestions going out to their local bodies and of reactions from the grass roots. This is what social theory would lead one to expect. The greater the degree of interaction in connection with an agreed upon organized activity, the greater the likelihood that the loyalty of the participants will grow.

Procedures differ in all these cases but it would seem, in view of the sentiment for more guidance from the AEA, as if a program could be worked out, perhaps initially as an experiment, with only a few of the joint membership states and any local associations or councils within them willing to cooperate.

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[12] Adult Leadership, January, 1956, p. 6.

Possible Functions for Local Organizations. Thus a local association could be concerned with keeping up to date a listing of local adult education agencies and their offerings, and with reducing overlapping of offerings or even competition, among other ways by circulating programs. It could rally the support of all interested, including participants, if some important program was threatened by an economy drive, whether library, public school, museum or what. It could cooperate in training volunteer leaders and in workshops on various topics, dealing with broad aspects of any subject and leaving specific applications up to any given agency. This would save time for the agency, result in larger groups, permit the employment of specialists and strengthen the whole leadership training program. A local association could also maintain a list of competent instructors and lecturers, hold conferences, issue a newsletter and in other ways be worth its cost. Nor would any such tasks conflict with the role of the AEA. They would be wholly local, though the AEA might offer suggestions if requested and through its local contacts and its own publications help develop a two-way flow of information of mutual benefit.

Some suggestions for state associations have already been given by interviewees. Such a body could promote the organization of local associations where necessary, serve as a clearing house of information within the state, promote adult education and safeguard its interests. Suggestions for the national body are given in other chapters in this report.

Chapter X

ADULT EDUCATION AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT*

The term "social movement" is one which is frequently heard in discussions of adult education and of the AEA. Some have claimed that the AEA is the voice of a social movement. Others hold that the goal of the AEA is or should be to advance adult education as a social movement. Thus approximately a third (34 per cent) of the members who returned questionnaires held that "promoting adult education as a social movement" was a very important purpose for the AEA to pursue, and approximately another third (34 per cent) held this aim to be somewhat important. Only 22 per cent claimed that this was not an important function for the AEA.[1] That at least some members feel that the AEA is doing something along these lines is suggested by the fact that 29 per cent of the respondents held that "assisting in a needed social movement" was one of their personal satisfactions from belonging to the AEA.[2] Furthermore, the belief that adult education is or could be a social movement is implied in the common practice of referring to the field of adult education as "the movement."

Such apparent agreement, however, leaves unanswered some serious questions. Do all adult educators mean the same thing when they say adult education is a social movement? What different meanings can this term have? In what ways does adult education appear similar to other social movements? How does it differ from them? If adult education is a social movement in some sense, what, if anything, does this imply for the activities and long-range goals of the AEA? This chapter will attempt to supply tentative answers to these questions.

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*This chapter was written by William L. Nicholls II.

[1] Ten per cent of the respondents did not answer this question.

[2] Cf. Chapter VI for a discussion of other personal satisfactions claimed by the members and the way in which these are distributed among various types of members.

Is the Term a Useful One? When our interviewees were asked to define the phrase, "adult education as a social movement," about one in ten reported that they had never heard the phrase before or had never been sure of its meaning.[3] Those who felt they were familiar with the phrase were about equally divided into two groups. The first group felt this was a useful and meaningful way to refer to adult education or certain aspects of it, but the second felt the phrase was a poor one or that it could be applied only in a limited and restricted way. This, however, is only the beginning of the difficulties, for not only was there disagreement as to whether the term should be used, but there was disagreement as to its meaning.

Types of Social Movements. Sociologically, the term "social movement" itself is none too clear. Herbert Blumer, one of the foremost contributors to the literature of social movements, notes that "a social movement signifies either a collective effort to transform some given area of established social relations, or else a large unguided change in social relations involving, however unwittingly, large numbers of participants.[4]

Quite clearly, the two broad classes of social behavior Blumer refers to are appreciably different. The social organization and feeling tone associated with a change varies according to whether it is accomplished by a purposeful, collective effort of a self-conscious group or by the unguided accumulation of many individual acts which are at most only loosely related. It is perhaps for this reason that in earlier writings Blumer distinguishes between *general social movements* which are "groping and unco-ordinated efforts . . . [having] only a general direction toward which they move in a slow, halting yet persistent fashion [and which] are unorganized, with neither established leadership nor recognized membership, and little guidance and control,"[5] and a *specific social movement* which "has a well-defined objective or goal which it seeks to reach [and which] develops an organization and structure, making it essentially a society. It develops a recognized and accepted leadership and a definite membership characterized by a 'we consciousness.' It forms a body of traditions, a guiding set of values, a philosophy, sets of rules, and a general body of expectations."[6] As illustrations of general social movements Blumer cites the labor movement, the youth movement, the pacifist movement, and the humanitarian movement. Specific social movements may develop out of the general ones. Thus the anti-slavery movement may be thought to have developed from the humanitarian movement. Other specific social movements would include Fascism, Communism, populism, the cooperative movement, the prohibition movement, the movement to abolish child labor, the civil service movement, etc.

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[3] Because of the press of time in some interviews, this question was not asked of 15 interviewees.

[4] "Collective Behavior" in Joseph Gittler (ed.), Review of Sociology: Analysis of a Decade, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1957, p. 145. Emphasis supplied.

By utilizing this distinction between general and specific social movements, we may note three different ways in which adult education might be called a social movement.

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[5] "Collective Behavior" in Alfred McClung Lee's (ed.), *New Outline of the Principles of Sociology*, New York: Barnes & Noble, 1946, p. 200.

[6] *Ibid*. p. 202.

1. Adult education may be thought of as a specific social movement whose aim lies in the area of social action and reform, with education *per se* as the *means* of achieving these goals. For convenience let us refer to this view of adult education as a *social action movement*. This appears to be the most common way in which the term "social movement" is applied to adult education.

2. Adult education may be viewed as a specific movement whose primary aim is not social action resulting from adult education, but the establishment of adult education and the principle of lifelong learning as a part of our society. Let us call this view the belief that adult education is a *specific educational movement*, the adjective "educational" referring to the fact that the changes aimed at are within the educational system. While those holding this position may note that adult education eventually may lead to or facilitate other social changes, the goal being sought is the establishment of adult education itself, not the other changes it may bring.

3. Adult education may also be seen as a *general educational movement*. This does not imply that there is a cooperative, organized, and dedicated group working for the establishment of adult education. Rather, it merely takes account of the fact that *for a variety of reasons*, not necessarily planned or coordinated, there is a general change occurring in our society today such that more and more people are entering adult education programs, and more and more programs are being established. Some leaders may be calling for an increase in this trend, but it is more the result of other natural forces than a direct result of the intention of some one group.[7]

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[7] Logically this scheme suggests that there might also be a view that adult education is a general action movement, that is, an unorganized trend in the society to solve social problems through adult education. This conception seems so vague and apparently has so few advocates among those interviewed that it has been neglected as a possibility.

Adult Education as a General Education Movement. Probably few would deny that adult education may be classified as a general educational movement, and apparently this is the meaning some of the interviewees attributed to the phrase, "adult education as a social movement." In defining this phrase, the following comments were contributed:

> It suggests that adult education is becoming part of our culture, that more people are becoming engaged in it during leisure time as well as at work time.
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> Adult education is a movement in that it is becoming more of an integral part of our whole educational process.
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>
> It is the increasing of interest in adult education which is brought about by new products, technology, etc. There is a staggering number of people who are interested. It is tied in with the increasing demands for classes by all kinds of different agencies.
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> - - - - -
>
> We should banish this phrase except in its sociological connotation referring to the flood of Americans into all types of adult education.

Others also noted this meaning in passing, while attacking other connotations of the term. In general, however, this meaning of "adult education as a social movement" was not the one most people referred to when they used the phrase.

Adult Education as a Specific Educational Movement. Relatively few of those interviewed took the position that the term "adult education as a social movement" meant that there was an organized and dedicated group whose specific goal was the establishment of more and better adult education, and that they were carrying out actions to bring this about. This does not mean that few held this belief, for the AEA itself is dedicated to these goals.

This, however, does seem to be the view expressed by Glen Burch in his article on adult education as a social movement.[8] He notes:

> I want to say again that I believe that when you talk about the adult education movement, . . . you have to think entirely of people, people who are possessed of certain specific, strongly held and shared convictions. People who consciously adhere to and share certain strongly felt values.

As to what these values are, Burch continues:

> The keystone in the arch of adult education's purpose . . . is . . . the cultivation of the human mind, and that it consists in the growth of understanding, insight, and ultimately some wisdom.

Adult Education as a Social Action Movement. For the majority of those interviewed, the phrase "adult education as a social movement" implied that adult education was a method of solving social problems or bringing about social change.

> The meaning rings back to the existence of major social problems and the need to undertake education to cope with them.
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> There are certain forces affecting individuals and society today, and the desire to learn how to meet them is what makes [adult education] a movement or cause.
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> This means that [the AEA] has a function to perform for the advance of welfare of society as distinguished from its responsibility to be a good membership organization. . . . Perhaps the AEA has another role--to increase the functioning of the democratic society.

In some cases it is difficult to determine whether it is a social action movement or specific educational movement that is referred to. This happens because one of the most common arguments used by the proponents of more and better adult education in our society is that adult education will be helpful in needed social change. Frequently, therefore, a confusion occurs as to whether an interviewee sees the social change aspect as the primary goal of the movement or only a justification for the existence of a movement. It is the belief of the authors that this confusion is not only one of interpretation but also exists in the minds of those interviewed. In either case, there appears to be a connection in the minds of those we spoke to between the phrase "social movement" and the idea of social action or social change.

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[8] "Adult Education's Great Purpose," Adult Leadership, June 1958.

This connection is, of course, a common one and perhaps gets to the essence of the idea of a specific social movement. As Blumer notes:

> Social movements can be viewed as collective enterprises to establish a new order of life. They have their inception in a condition of unrest, and derive their motive power on the one hand from dissatisfaction with the current form of life, and on the other hand, from wishes and hopes for a new scheme or system of living.[9]

The connection was also made officially by the Social Philosophy Committee of the AEA in its pronouncement that "Social action on behalf of reasoned social change is the functional raison d'etre of the adult education movement."[10]

Analysis of the questionnaires filled out by AEA's members also indicates that this connection is frequently made by the rank and file members. Those receiving the questionnaire were asked to express their agreement or disagreement with the statement, "Social action on behalf of social change is the basic reason for the existence of a modern adult education movement." Fifty per cent agreed with this statement, 27 per cent disagreed, and 23 per cent were uncertain or did not answer the question. Furthermore, those who agreed with this statement were more likely than those who disagreed to report that "assisting in a needed social movement" was one of their personal satisfactions from the AEA, and that it was very important for the AEA to "promote adult education as a social movement." This is shown in Table 78. Thus it appears that for many members, although apparently not for all, the concept of adult education as a social movement does carry the connotation of social action.

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[9] Op. cit., p. 199.

[10] Cf. Orlie A. H. Pell, "Social Philosophy at the Grass Roots—The Work of AEA's Committee on Social Philosophy," Adult Education, vol. II, no. 4, April 1952, pp. 124-127.

Table 78. Importance for AEA to Promote Adult Education as a Social Movement, and "Assisting in a Needed Social Movement" as a Personal Satisfaction, by Agreement with the Proposition That Social Action Is the Basic Reason for an Adult Education Movement

Social action the basic reason for adult education	% think promoting social movement very important	% get personal satisfaction from assisting in a social movement	Base of %
Agree strongly	57%	64%	(228)
Agree	40%	35%	(766)
Uncertain or no answer	24%	26%	(432)
Disagree	25%	27%	(461)
Disagree strongly	22%	24%	(60)

Of course a social movement has to have a set of problems to solve, a set of conditions to correct. What these are for adult education as a social action movement is suggested by the following excerpts from the interviews:

> Now with the rapid change in society we need adult education to prevent obsolescence. For example, in the world of today such things and concepts as nationalism, provincialism, the feeling that everyone who is not with us is an enemy, these ideas are obsolete in the modern world.

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> I'm like a lot of people who feel we're in an historical period which can properly be called a period of crisis, . . . there is an accumulation of choices building up faster than can be resolved. Because of this our consciences won't let us stay away from consciously influencing the choices of people.

> I believe that if we are to survive and to take the leadership position in the world, we have to prepare not just a few leaders but the whole world to understand what's implicated and what has to be done. . . . People have to accept the interdependence of people and nations. They have to learn that pigment in skin has nothing to do with values.

These and other comments can be summarized as pointing to the social problems of: 1) international crisis; 2) prejudice; 3) isolationism; 4) automation; and 5) other rapid social changes in today's world which are reputed to result in making today's knowledge, skills, and ideas obsolete, and which are also thought to lead to incomplete personality development. Like all "social problems," they involve major value judgements on the part of those seeing them as problems, and in the present case these value judgements seem to derive not so much from adult education itself as from the personal convictions of the adult educators and from popular definitions of these situations in present day America.[11] It is perhaps for this reason that these problems tend to be both very general and ones with which few could argue. On the other hand, their very non-controversial nature appears to make them

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[11] John Walker Powell expresses a contrary view in Learning Comes of Age New York: Association Press, 1956. There he claims that "the values by which the adult educator is guided are direct and practical implications flowing from the postulates of his profession." P. 231.

ones about which strong feelings are not easy to arouse. They do not appear to be the typical kinds of problems, mainly those which cause unrest among large segments of the population, to which most social movements address themselves.

Those who hold with the movement idea of adult education go on to emphasize the importance or unique ability of adult education to solve these problems.[12]

> There is the growing concept that lifelong learning is an essential in a dynamic society. As a movement we are committed to the idea that people can and must learn to fulfill obligations. Those in the movement believe this and are working to see it come about.
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> Reformers have looked at the school, and others have thought of making a brave new world through influencing pre-school experiences. . . . I don't think things can be done that way. I think one way of doing this is through the reeducation of the adults in the community. To change children's schools, you need to change adults. Adult education is the key element in change. This is a reform interest, but it is a belief that reform not geared to educational methods is pretty worthless.
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> - - - - -
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> I actually feel that adult education is at our present stage in the world the most important area of education. It has increasingly become a major concern because of the increasing rate of change, and there are no other ways to cope with the problems that are arising from these changes. . . . Nothing is more important than this. The final optimum development of the individual rests upon it, the salvation of the world rests upon it.
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> - - - - -
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> Adults are in the position of decision making, and adult education gives both more responsibility for decision making and increases the basis for decisions by broadening the number who are included in making the decisions. With the acceleration in changes which are coming, it is the only way in which we can face change.
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[12] The emphasis has been added by the authors in each of the following quotations.

> /Adult education as a social movement implies/ the idea that lifelong learning is imperative to the welfare of our society today.
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> To me adult education is not just the fourth level of education. It is a way of approaching problems in an organized way--to learn what a situation is and what can be done about it.

Some systematic evidence on the belief adult educators hold of the effectiveness of adult education is found in the questionnaires. There the AEA members were asked to indicate in which of eleven areas they felt adult education could make major contributions. Table 79 not only shows that adult educators see a wide range of at least potential effectiveness for their field, but those who have more of a social action orientation tend to see it as more effective in many of the "social problem" areas.

Some turn to another aspect of social movements, their esprit de corps and morale, to justify the applicability of this term to adult education. This is the argument of the following:

> What makes it a movement is the sense of unity on the part of many people.
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> - - - - -
>
> /Adult education as a social movement/ is a common commitment on the part of people to improve the character of our society through adult education.

Thus adult education appears to resemble various other specific social movements in several ways. It is oriented to various social problems, and its proponents are convinced of the potential value of their movement to the eventual solution of these problems. Furthermore, there is a self-conscious group with esprit de corps dedicated to these ends. However, it also differs in interesting ways from most other social

Table 79: The Percentage of AEA Members Seeing Adult Education as Effective in Each of Eleven Areas According to Their Agreement That Social Action Is the Basic Reason for the Adult Education Movement

	Social action is the basic reason			
Area	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Total
Obtaining better homes, roads, and schools	49%	38%	36%	43%
Overcoming major personality inadequacies	49	39	38	44
Preventing crime	29	16	17	23
Reducing poverty	31	18	17	24
Easing international tensions	51	40	40	46
Reducing racial and religious tensions	74	70	68	72
Training better citizens	92	88	91	91
Easing the adjustment to old age and retirement	86	82	87	85
Helping adults to enjoy leisure more fully	88	83	92	88
Increasing vocational skills	73	74	79	75
Developing religious convictions	19	19	23	20
Base of %	(1013)	(448)	(539)	(2000)

movements. First, adult education does not so much provide a solution to the problems as propose a method of working toward their solution, the method consisting of informing the public, arousing their concern about the problems, and then working through the standard democratic machinery of government, where necessary, to solve them.[13] Because of this method of operation adult education is not seen as using one of the most standard and identifying techniques of most social movements, agitation. (Perhaps the very generality of the social problems mentioned and their wide recognition makes agitation unnecessary.) In fact, it is because of this agitation and promotion element of most social movements that some people who hold the above views concerning the social goals of adult education prefer to avoid the use of the term "social movement" in regard to adult education.

> If by [adult education as a social movement] you mean taking a cause and trying to win adherents to it by methods of promotion, etc., which are counter to the methods of education, I'm not for it.

A second way in which adult education differs from most social movements lies in the fact that it actually calls for very little change in the organization of society. An assumption of the adult education movement is that there will be no major change in the democratic form of government now in effect, and there is no change called for in the basic economic, kinship, religious, or other major institutions in society. Rather, the activities of adult education as a movement would seem to be directed more toward making people live up to the obligations they already have in these areas: to be a "better" citizen, parent, business man, employee, or union man, although it is recognized that there may be some dislocation in these roles which will need adjustment because of various social trends in the society. More generally, adult education seems more directed toward changing individuals than toward social change in the sense of changing or reforming society.

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[13] Those who hold that the changing of particular "attitudes" and values of those educated is a duty of adult education would constitute an exception to this statement.

Finally, some doubt may be thrown on the claim that adult education is a social movement by denying that, in fact, it is resulting in much action or much movement toward the goals it has set itself. Perhaps it is too early to expect much as the result of this movement, but the prime requisite of any social movement, namely, action to reach its goals, does not appear to be much in evidence.

Criticisms of the Social Action Movement View. Many of those interviewed took exception, often vehement exception, to the idea that adult education could be characterized as a social movement in the above sense, and these people about equalled in number those who saw adult education as a movement. Some disliked the idea merely because they mistakenly felt that movements were always temporary things, while they wanted it to be "a lasting, deep, and important part of society; a formal part, not just a movement of the day." Others felt that while adult education did have implications for social change, social action should not be assigned so high a priority among adult education's goals, at least publicly. This view is found in the following comments.

> I like to think of adult education as an educational movement. If you talk to people in terms of what they want to do, you interest them, but you frighten them off by saying this is a big social movement. People are likely to think of a social movement as welfare.

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> Adult education, period. Delete "social movement." Adult education itself will bring more social change. . . . To treat it as having social change as an overt aim is psychologically unwise. Give the people facts, teach. Change will come.

> It scares people [to call adult education a social movement] because they do not know what is meant though they may be for specific changes. The Extension Service has never said it was for social change, but look at the changes it has helped to bring about.

Others took even stronger exception to the social action or social change idea:

> There is an argument in education in general between those who see teachers as leaders of the future and those who see them as bearers of culture. I don't see myself as a person to tell the world how to better itself. Hence I don't like the term.

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> Some AEA people seem to use this phrase to indicate that adult education should produce social change and the social change they want. This is foolish and dangerous.

Of particular interest are those who suggest that the phrase "adult education as a social movement" is now passé. That several people took this position suggests that the view of adult education as a social movement is one which was held more strongly in the past than at present, and this contributes doubts to the idea that adult education is a viable social movement today.

> We used to think of adult education in those terms, but no more. I don't see adult educators as out to solve the world's problems any more. I see [adult education] as a provision of services and skills. It was almost a religious movement.

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> That's over with now. There was a somewhat messianic feeling about the salvation of democracy, but it's too generalized an idea now. It doesn't arouse opposition. You can't have a movement unless you're against unholy forces. . . .People fight these forces through other organizations. For example, I am a member of the Civil Liberties Union, so I fought McCarthyism through that organization.

Some very limited systematic evidence from the questionnaires tends to support this view. While there are slight variations within decade age groups, 52 per cent of the members 40 years old or more agree that social action on behalf of social change is the basic reason for an adult education movement, but only 47 per cent of those 30 to 39 and 42 per cent of those under 30 agree. Thus the social action view appears to be less common among the younger members, and this suggests, although it certainly does not prove, that support for this view may be declining.

Two interviewees who apparently had done some extensive thinking about the claim that adult education is a social action movement were able to offer hypotheses as to why some people supported this idea:

> A lot of people who are unhappy about being social actionists any more think [adult education] is where they can carry on their action. A lot of us during the depression years were organizing labor. We have gotten old and think we can [now improve things] through adult education. It isn't a social movement; they don't do anything controversial. [But some people] think that by a sound liberal education we may do more than by getting votes for some social movement.

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> I don't think [adult education as a social movement] is a good phrase. It may be a good phrase for those who have no defined social philosophy and therefore feel that by dealing with personality and building participation for participation's sake and want improvement for improvement's sake. But when you have a special goal and special philosophy, then adult education is one of the methods of attainment of the goal.

Various other interviewees agreed that while adult education was not in itself a movement, those involved in it used it in other social movements. In fact, prominent among those interviewees who felt most vehemently that adult education was not a social movement were those who were active in strong and recognized social movements. Thus a member active in labor activities notes:

> I don't see [adult education as a social movement]. It involves the people--the people in AEA are also in social movements, but I don't see AEA's mission as a social movement.

And a formerly active member of cooperatives and credit unions states:

> Adult education is not a movement. I consider a movement an organized structure where people know where they fit, a structure with goals and objectives and movement toward them. It is a broadly based thing. I think in terms of the cooperative movement and the credit union movement. They have goals they are not afraid to get up and defend.

That a substantial number of leaders of adult education and the AEA doubt that adult education constitutes a social action movement probably constitutes the most potent argument that it is not, for a group that does not see itself as a social movement is probably not likely to gain adherents and achieve its ends by making outsiders join it and see it that way.

The "Actionist" Position and Relations to the AEA. Whatever the feasibility and wisdom of making social action an explicit and high priority goal for adult education, those who take this actionist approach apparently have thereby additional reasons for supporting the AEA and seeing it as a useful and valuable organization. For them membership in the AEA may be valuable not only for keeping up with the field, learning new techniques, and meeting others in the same work, but it may also be seen as a means of working with others to obtain various personally supported social goals. It may be for this reason that the members who agree that social action is the basic reason for an adult education movement are found more commonly than others: 1) to agree that the best hope for the development of the field of adult education lies in the growth of a strong, centrally directed national organization, 2) to feel that it would make a great deal of difference if there were no national organization such as the AEA, and 3) claim to be interested in the AEA as an organization.[14]

Implications of the Movement Idea For the AEA. From the foregoing discussion it should be clear that the term "social movement" covers at least three separate ideas, i.e., that adult education is a general educational movement, that it is a specific educational movement, and that it is a social action movement. Because of these variations in meaning, the questionnaire responses indicating support for promotion of adult education as some unspecified kind of social movement should be interpreted with caution, for they may hide important differences among the members in what they felt they were supporting.[15] Furthermore, it would seem advisable to keep these various connotations of the terms separate in future discussions of adult education as a movement.

To the extent that adult education is seen only as a general educational movement, there would seem to be little that this definition of the situation calls for on the part of the AEA. This belief suggests no specific program of structure for the AEA, although it may alert the AEA to the idea that adult education is on the increase for a variety of reasons and these might deserve careful study.

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[14] Cf. Table 13 in Appendix C for the tabulations on which these conclusions are based.

[15] Support for promoting adult education as a social movement may also have been artificially inflated by the absence of any item in the questionnaire suggesting that the AEA do a better job of more generally promoting adult education and the principle of lifelong learning. Thus respondents who wished to emphasize this task for the AEA may have checked "promoting adult education as a social movement" as the nearest goal even though they did not agree with all the implications of this phrase.

If the AEA is seen as the organizational expression of a specific educational movement to establish adult education more fully as part of our society, more specific activities and organizational arrangements are implied. If the goal of bringing about such changes in the education system is given high priority (perhaps at the expense of services to individual members) it would seem to suggest attempts to inform the public of the value of adult education and closer relations with other adult education organizations for joint action. To pursue such a goal the AEA would not seem to require a large or broadly based membership, but it would need members who were willing to contribute financially to support such activities rather than members who expected many specific and personal services for their dues.

To shape the AEA into a social action movement would also seem to require certain specific organizational activities and arrangements, although what these would be is difficult to determine because of the vagueness of the idea. Once again close cooperation with various other adult education organizations would be called for, but in this instance the more actionist, rather than the more professional, of these organizations would seem to be those needed for cooperation. With such goals, the membership probably would have to be narrowed sufficiently so that agreement could be reached on specific action goals to pursue and at the same time broadened to accept more volunteer and unpaid people in the field. A more fully integrated and centrally directed complex of national, state, and local organizations would probably also be required to mobilize support for the various action programs, as well as cooperation with like-minded agencies.

It should be noted that the present structure and composition of the AEA is not well suited for this purpose. The membership appears to be composed largely of paid adult educators whose interest in the AEA derives primarily, if not exclusively, from the publications of the organization and the opportunity to meet with other adult educators to discuss specific problems. Relations with other adult education organizations do not seem to be strong enough to form the basis of concerted social action, and the great diversity of the organizations which do have ties to the AEA through the CNO would seem likely to limit agreement on particular social goals, except such as are so abstract as to deny the possibility of action.

This does not imply, however, that the membership is generally uninterested in these goals or that they want the AEA to do nothing along these lines, although it will be seen in Chapter XIII that in comparison with other possible activities these obtain a rather low priority. Nor does it imply that within the AEA no groups exist who are seriously dedicated either to the social action movement view or to the specific education movement views. Such groups do exist and their concern in these areas probably helps increase their interest in the AEA as an organization which could exert more efforts in these directions. If the AEA cannot pursue these goals as fully as they would like, such individuals undoubtedly present the AEA with a serious problem. Specific denial of these goals might well alienate such individuals from the AEA. The vagueness and generality of the AEA's present goals, although raising various other problems for the organization, may have had some value in at least not expressly ruling out the more specific and varied goals which some members may have thought it was pursuing. Thus to the extent that a clarification of the goals is necessary, with the implication that some individuals will find the AEA not standing for what they thought it stood for, some other arrangements may be necessary to deal with possibly alienated segments.

Here those supporting the idea of a specific educational movement would not seem to raise much of a problem. In the past the AEA has at least in principle held the goals of promoting adult education generally and establishing it as part of our society and undoubtedly AEA will continue to do so in the future. Although total mobilization of the organization for this goal may not be possible, some efforts along these lines, such as limited lobbying activities and occasional press releases, would not be difficult to continue. Thus at least something may be done along these lines which may satisfy those who hold this interest.

A greater problem arises for those who support the social action movement idea. If the conversion of the AEA into a more actionist organization seems unrealistic, as it does to the authors, it can at least be pointed out that improving adult education and helping to make it more common in America may have action implications in the long run. Furthermore, for those who wish to see a more actionist approach at present, a special section might be created where such individuals could meet, exchange experiences, and consider in more detail the means by which adult education may be brought into activities for social change.[16] Thus the problem might be solved by providing an organizational position for people with a more actionist outlook while not attempting to impose this view on the total organization and membership.

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[16] Because many of those holding an actionist position appear especially interested in community development, an area of adult education which is itself oriented to action, the creation of a special section may not be necessary if the community development section is able to provide enough interest for those with social action interests.

Chapter XI

THE AEA AND PROBLEMS OF PROFESSIONALIZATION*[1]

In the previous chapter it was noted that there appeared to be a considerable amount of controversy as to whether adult education should be considered a social movement, and it was suggested that this question had implications for the organization and activities of the AEA. This chapter takes up a similar and related problem: Should adult education be conceived of as a profession or an emerging profession? Here again it is likely that the answer may have implications for the program and structure of the AEA.

What Is a Profession?

The Criteria of a Profession. Sociologically speaking, a profession is an occupation which requires a large body of technical, scientific, and theoretical knowledge for its performance, and which maintains the ideal, widely subscribed to both by the members of that occupation and the public, that the professionals should utilize this knowledge for the general good of their clients and the public, rather than for personal gain. Of course this last requirement does not imply that professionals as persons are uninterested in supporting themselves, but rather that they have a duty to perform their profession apart from interests in monetary gain.

These two broad characteristics of a profession imply additional attributes. The extensive knowledge the professionals are supposed to have means a long and intensive formal preparation, and in our society this implies specialized training in a school or university. Also required is a professional society to set standards for this training and to enforce the professional ethics. In addition, since members of a profession possess a unique body of knowledge, they are less subject to direct and continuous external supervision of their occupational activities than persons in other occupations, and generally, this lack of supervision is seen as a right and privilege of the professional.[2]

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*This chapter was written by William L. Nicholls II.

[1] The authors are indebted to Mary Jean Huntington Cornish of the Bureau of Applied Social Research for many helpful suggestions in the development of this chapter.

Degrees of Professionalization. There is no hard and fast line today between those occupations which are professions and those which are not, and consequently one speaks of degrees of professionalization. The closer an occupation comes to meeting the above requirements, the more professionalized it is. Few would doubt today that physicians, lawyers, and clergymen are professionals in the full sense of the term. Dentists, architects and scientists have achieved this status more recently but their claims to professional status seem established. Certain other groups, such as librarians, social workers, clinical psychologists, accountants, and nurses, are not yet fully accepted as professionals by the public, although each may be considered rather highly professionalized.

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[2] These criteria of a profession are drawn largely from W. J. Goode, R. K. Merton, and M. J. Huntington Cornish, Professions in American Society: Casebook and Sociological Analysis, forthcoming. At the AEA's 1955 Conference in St. Louis, Howard McClusky, speaking on "Is Adult Education a Profession?" suggested four criteria. Two of these, a well defined body of knowledge and standards by which to judge performance, overlap those above. Two others he mentioned, a large number of clearly defined positions recognized by the occupant and his public, and a large number of career opportunities, may also be added, although they seem more applicable to the establishment of a craft or occupation, which must occur prior to professionalization, rather than to the establishment of a profession itself. Howard S. Becker, whose views are reported in "Some Problems of Professionalization" in Adult Education, vol. IV, no. 2, Winter 1956, pp. 101-105, contributed further useful ideas at this same meeting.

Certain other groups, such as bankers, real estate brokers, insurance agents and policemen, may on occasion make claims to professional status, but in general the public does not recognize these claims.

The Professional Status of Adult Education

Abstract Knowledge. According to the above definition, it would appear that adult education is not very far along the road to professional status. Even some of those who describe themselves as fully committed to adult education as an occupation doubt that there is today a substantial body of specialized technical and abstract knowledge about the education of adults. Thus one member of the Executive Committee notes:

> One of the principal problems [of working in the field of adult education] is in not having any area of authority. Every academic discipline has its own area of authority where it is the final word. But this is not true of adult education, except now where there are some departments of adult education.

Another former Executive Committee member, in describing the term "professional adult educator," notes:

> This would be a person who had attained certain skills, abilities, and knowledge in the profession of adult education that would qualify him to function effectively in helping adults to learn. But we don't have a profession yet. If you wanted a mold, it would be that the professional adult educator would be one who passed a formal curriculum in a university, but we don't know what this curriculum should be.

Finally, a third interviewee states this point of view quite clearly when he notes:

> The concept of the profession [of adult education] needs definition. It should require the kind of educational training provided through a university. The term has been borrowed haphazardly in an attempt to effect status before the fact. We need a body of knowledge to become professional. We are not now providing this. We therefore have no professional adult educators.

Of course there are many, and probably the majority, who feel that at least a small core of general and abstract knowledge now exists, specifically pertaining to adult learning and education. The fact that some of our major universities have departments of adult education or offer courses or degrees in this field attests to the willingness of the more established disciplines and professions to admit that there is some body of knowledge specific to this field which deserves a place in the university.

Few, however, will argue that the core of knowledge concerning adult education is sizable; and what is more important, there are many adult educators, even among the leaders of the field, who hold that university training is really irrelevant and is actually no better than and perhaps less valuable than in-service training or experience. So long as such "apprenticeship" training is seen as sufficient, one of the basic preconditions of having a profession of adult education is, of course, not met.

Ethical Considerations. On the ethical side, however, adult education would seem to measure up more fully. It would be difficult to find an adult educator who would deny that adult educators were motivated by a desire to help the clients of the field and to work for the good of the general public. However, this is the claim of almost every occupational group that aspires to professional status, and the more crucial test lies in the public acceptance of this claim. In some areas of adult educational activities, this is probably not too hard to come by. Adult education divisions in traditional education and welfare institutions, such as public schools, colleges and universities, libraries, health and welfare agencies, etc., undoubtedly can and do utilize the publicly accepted service orientation claim of their institutions to cover their own activities. Some adult educators in profit-making organizations, unions, and various pressure group organizations such as the National Association of Manufacturers, the Anti-Defamation League, the American Civil Liberties Union, or the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, may appear indistinguishable to the untrained eye from public relations experts, business executives or propagandists, despite their titles of "educational director" or their utilization of educational methods.

Professional Code. It is true, of course, that the doctor may (and sometimes must) treat and the lawyer defend any person whose problems warrant professional help. Furthermore, the company doctor or the company lawyer may be employed by any of a wide range of organizations without endangering either his own professional status or that of his profession. However, this is possible in part because each has a professional association which has developed a code of ethics to define what may and may not be done by the professional in these more delicate situations, and under what conditions various persons and organizations may be given assistance. It is this code and its enforcement which help to preserve the professional status of the occupation, wherever the professional is employed.[3]

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[3] It is not hard to imagine the beginnings of such a code that would cover educators outside as well as inside educational institutions. For example, the professional educator would be enjoined not to limit the knowledge he passes on only to the side of the argument favored by his employer. Nor would he be allowed to distort, suppress, or manufacture factual information. Although such a code would be difficult to enforce, as all such codes are, public knowledge of such a code could be a powerful influence for the establishment of a claim to professional status.

The complete lack of such a professional code in adult education, and the absence of a professional organization which could enforce such a code, as well as set standards in training and certify adult education practitioners, once again shows how far adult education is from full professional status. At best only a rudimentary beginning can be found today in AEA's Professional Development Policies Committee, which has the following task:

> Assembles current information about the status of professional education, literature, and standards, and needs of the adult education field and informs the membership on these matters; provides for continuing review, evaluation, and development of standards within the profession so that they may be improved and strengthened; formulates recommendations on policies and actions concerning professional development for the consideration of the Executive Committee and Delegate Assembly; takes special responsibility for the development of intercommunication and program activities for the professional membership of the AEA.[4]

The broad range of subjects which this relatively inactive committee has been given, and the tentativeness and exploratory nature of the professionalizing tasks set, indicate once again how far adult education has to go to reach professional status. On the other hand, the professors of adult education have become a Commission of the AEA, which has been meeting annually for several days since 1957. It is working effectively at problems of the content of and training for adult education, and in other ways is furthering the development of professional standards and attitudes. The transcript of the annual Conferences is published. The effort, supported by a Kellogg Foundation grant, is scheduled to continue through 1961.

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[4] This quotation is taken from the Organizational Hand Book--Hand Book on Committees, Commissions, and Sections, as revised November 16, 1957.

Summary. The above analysis thus leads to these conclusions: 1) Adult education is not a profession in the full sense of the word; 2) the major block to professional status appears to be the absence of a substantial body of techniques and abstract knowledge pertaining to adult education; 3) however, other obstacles exist, such as the problem of gaining public recognition, the establishing of a professional society, the development of a code of ethics, the establishment of a standard of training, and the building of mechanisms to certify adult educators and to enforce the standards and ethics set; 4) nevertheless, adult education shows some signs of professionalization, such as the existence of at least a national society with a committee on Professional Development, and the establishment of departments of adult education in some leading universities.

That adult education is not more professionalized is hardly surprising to those who have any acquaintance with the history of either adult education or the more established professions. Adult education is a relatively new area of interest, and attempts to develop abstract and generalized knowledge in the area are even newer. Considering the limited time in which formal university training has been available in the field, it is understandable that few persons in this large and growing field have received degrees in adult education, and that formal standards of training have not been set up. While the history of adult education is written in years, the development of a profession is typically the work of decades and even centuries, as evidenced by the struggles of nurses, social workers, librarians, surgeons, and accountants to achieve professional status, not all yet successful. Similarly, adult education can not expect professional status, in the full sense of the term, for some decades to come, and it is of course obvious that a premature and arbitrary establishment of a professional organization, code of ethics, and standards of training will not necessarily hasten the process.

Should Adult Education Become a Profession?

For many adult educators the question is not "When will adult education become a profession?" but "Should adult education become a profession?" Apparently there are at least some members of the AEA who would answer this last question affirmatively, and who feel that the AEA should play a role in assisting the further professionalization of adult education. Approximately a third of the interviewees reported that such activities were or should be part of the program of the AEA, and a smaller number held that the AEA had already accomplished something along these lines. Among those responding to the questionnaire 50 per cent replied that it was very important for the AEA to "advance adult education as a profession," 33 per cent indicated that they felt this goal was somewhat important. Only 10 per cent felt it was unimportant.[5] Support for AEA's assistance in professionalization is therefore apparently greater than for its promotion of adult education as a social movement. Furthermore, 29 per cent of the members reported that one of their personal satisfactions from membership lay in "the opportunity to contribute to the advancement of a profession of adult education."

Some Objections. Support for the professionalization of adult education, however, is not unanimous. Some of the leaders interviewed questioned the value of attempting to achieve professional status and raised the problem as to whether an emphasis on building a profession might not seriously hinder adult education in realizing its more important goals. Such questions are typically asked at the early stages of professionalization but this, of course, does not detract from the seriousness of the problems raised. For example, we find the following opinion expressed:

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[5] Because the interviewees' opinions were obtained from "free answer" or open-ended questions and the questionnaire respondents' views were ascertained by structured or check answer questions, differences in the support of these two groups for professionalization may be more the result of the kinds of questions asked than of real differences between them. Moreover, 7 per cent of the respondents did not answer this question.

> Here you have a confusion of person and role. Are you defining "adult educator" as one dimension of a role which may have many different dimensions or as a person who is full-time in adult education? If you are trying to "professionalize" the dimension of the role by showing that it calls for knowledge, definitions, etc., that I'm all for. . . . But to develop a cadre of people who do nothing else but adult education, this is giving up the whole problem.

Some adult educators, and especially those with the longest service in the field, see movements toward professionalization as limited to and motivated by self-centered status seeking. For example:

> I don't go much for titles. I never liked to be called an expert in adult education. There is a strong push now not to call anyone an adult educator who has not had the required courses. I don't believe in things like this. I never paid the money to join Phi Beta Kappa and I never wore the key. My friends in social work tell me, "You care too much for people. You have to think more about yourself and the profession." I feel the same idea is coming into adult education now. There is a concern with the profession and not with the people who need help.

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> I wouldn't be aligned with the group moving for professionalization. I wouldn't care to see all effort going toward standardizations in content or organization or in the setting up of fees. This would make [adult education] unrelated to life. It is not important to get us status. That's not important to me. I don't like that kind of life.

For others, a desire for professionalization is seen as an inevitable but minor aspect of adult education, which should be satisfied to get it out of the way. Thus one interviewee notes:

> We have been joking about those who want a professional society of adult educators so that the professionals could be called Fellows of Adult Education. Then we would call them the F. A. E. and the rest of us could go our own way.

Additional objections come from some members who do not oppose the goal of professionalization in the abstract, but who feel that it is far too early to make serious attempts at professionalization.

> We don't have a profession as medicine does, and I am skeptical about the advantages of carrying it all the way into a profession because of the exclusiveness. We may have one some day, but I would be concerned if we began to staff all our positions with students, . . . because they had taken courses called "adult education." I am for professionalization, but we must be thoughtful about what should go into it.

One Profession or Many? Objections to the professionalization of adult education also may be raised in terms of trying to put all of adult education within the same profession, or at least the same professional society. The teaching of children and young adults is clearly divided into at least the two professional groups of college teachers and public school teachers. Similarly, it is not difficult to imagine multiple professions within adult education, composed of public school teachers, college professors, education directors of voluntary organizations, training directors in industry, etc. With such an arrangement NAPSAE would serve, for example, as the professional organization for public school teachers, a separate professional society might exist for the professors, and the AEA would be a more general organization for all adult educators, but it would not itself attempt to set up standards or enforce a code for all these diverse groups. The American Association for the Advancement of Science plays such a general role in its field, and the National Conference on Social Welfare has a similar position.

One might also consider the professionalization of adult education as completely unnecessary (especially if it is assumed that there is no body of knowledge general to all adult educators) and view instead those doing adult education as groups of various professionals, such as librarians, professors, public school teachers, etc., whose professional status and problems derive from their institutional bases.

The Advantages of Professional Status. Considering these objections to the professionalization of adult education, at least as a current goal, it may be well to consider both the alleged advantages which may result when an occupation, or occupational specialty, achieves professional status, and the possible disadvantages which professional status, or the striving for it, may entail.

Some of the advantages have already been indicated. When a group of practitioners are regarded by the public and other occupational groups as holding specialized technical knowledge and as applying this knowledge ethically, the group is usually granted the prestige accorded professions generally. This has advantages both for the individual practitioners and the occupation as a group. Such prestige makes easier the acquisition of funds for research; it gives more weight to the pronouncements of the members of the occupation in areas considered within the competence of the profession; and the prestige reward of the individual practitioners helps attract more able recruits to the field. Professions typically set their own standards of training and certification, and this means not only that they can raise their standards in a boot-strap operation, but that external groups, such as the government, which are not as familiar with the requirements of the occupation, are kept from interfering. In addition, by holding a monopoly of certified persons in the occupation, they can enforce their code of ethics both vis-a-vis those certified and vis-a-vis their employers or clients. Thus, for example, in adult education an employer who might wish to utilize his educational director as a propagandist would face the choice of either having a program which was educational rather than propaganda or not having a certified adult educator to conduct the program.

Disadvantages and Problems of Professionalization. The building of a profession of adult education may also be seen as incurring certain difficulties. The creation of highly visible and important prestige differences within the field may be seen as running at cross-purposes to the aim of creating a broad group of dedicated equals striving together to advance adult education as a "cause" or a social action movement. There is danger that in the process of making sharp distinctions between the professional and non-professional in the field, many persons who could make valuable contributions may be excluded and thereby alienated. And there is the possibility that a standardization of training prior to the existence of a substantial body of knowledge may tend to stultify and ritualize the limited knowledge, rather than encourage the exploration of new knowledge.

Howard S. Becker, who views adult education as an occupation beginning to move toward professional status, notes some additional problems which typically arise in the early stages of professionalization.[6] Because most new professions initially draw their members from other fields, as is typically the case in adult education, they tend to create marginal men — that is, the members of the developing profession find their new interest separates them both organizationally and psychologically from their old groups but they do not yet have a clearly defined place and area of competence of their own.[7] In such a situation they are likely to be seen as different, and perhaps inferior, among their colleagues. Such a situation brings with it numerous problems.

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[6] *Op. cit.*

Another problem which looms especially large in the early stages is that of determining who is a member of the new profession. Training is often used as a criterion, but because the founders typically come from other fields they lack the specific training in the new profession. Although frequently it is just such founders who are the first to call for professionalization, their presence creates a problem. While they obviously cannot be excluded from the profession, their inclusion provides a basis for others to insist that training is not necessary, and this makes difficult the establishment and enforcing of professional standards.

The "Professional" Adult Educator

The problem of determining criteria for acceptance to the profession is one which appears to exist already in adult education, at least in incipient form. Although the question is rarely posed formally, it does appear to lie at the heart of the frequent informal discussions of the meaning of the phrase, "professional adult educator." Furthermore, the strength of the feelings which such discussions often evoke is testimony both to the salience of the problem for adult educators and to the potentially divisive consequences of attempting to establish, even informally, some criteria for acceptance.

When the interviewees were asked to define in their own words the phrase, "professional adult educator," a few dismissed it as a completely meaningless phrase or one referring to a type of adult education which does not in fact exist.[8] For the majority, however, the term implied little more than an adult educator who earned his living in adult education. Some restricted it further to mean only those who worked full-time in the field. Here, of course, some obvious semantic difficulties arise. One commonly speaks of professional football players, professional carpenters, and professional thieves to distinguish these people who earn their income and spend their time at these pursuits from the amateur football players, carpenters, and thieves who may engage in these activities in a part-time or unpaid way. This does not imply, however, that economically successful football players, carpenters, or thieves are professionals in the same sense that doctors, lawyers, or teachers are.

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[7] Many of these same points are raised by Burton R. Clark, op. cit., in his analysis of the marginality of adult education.

More interesting definitions of the "professional" adult educator arise when training is either specifically included or excluded as a criterion. Thus we find the following comments:

> This /"professional"/ is a term you should use. It should be applied to those who are trained in the field, . . . I mean those with a degree from a graduate department . . . . The fact is that there is a body of knowledge for the teaching of adults that is different from the techniques used for teaching children. This has to be emphasized.

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> To me this term identifies the fact that we have people who are trained to give professional direction to a program. By professional people I mean those who have had training in a graduate program in adult education, or they may have something in lieu of this.

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> This is the person who has had training in techniques and philosophy from a university, basically, but I wouldn't want to exclude those people with experience and in-service training. I know many people in the field who have had no formal training in the field who do good work.

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[8] This question was one of those which were systematically omitted whenever the other time commitments of the interviewees restricted the length of the interview. Consequently only 52 of the 80 interviewees were asked for a definition.

> This is the trained and/or practiced person engaged in training or working in the broad field of adult learning and growth. The training can be either in-service training or academic training. For the great range of service, the academic training isn't sufficient.
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> To me professionalism is high standards in thinking and the ability to relate to others. It means top grade A performance. It hasn't anything to do with whether a person has a Ph.D. or not.
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> - - - - -
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> Not only those taught by Houle, Verner, or McClusky /three professors of adult education/ are professional educators. That's a lot of hooey.

These comments indicate the range of training that various educators mention, and they also suggest the ambivalence many feel with regard to the problem. By rough counting it is found that among those who mention training at all, about as many say it is not a criterion of being a "professional" adult educator as say that it is, and only a handful restrict this term in its current usage to those who hold graduate degrees in adult education. This appears to be another indication of the early stage of professionalization of the field.

Among those who rule out training of one sort or another as the distinguishing mark of a "professional" adult educator, however, some remark that they wish this were a criterion of definition, and some take the developmental approach that this is increasingly becoming the mark of the professional. These sentiments are found in the following comments:

> What we call professional workers now are those who are being paid to work in adult education programs regardless of their previous training. What I would like to think of as a professional is one who has had some formal training in education, the liberal arts, and other fields, preferably at the graduate level.
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>
> When I say "professional adult educator" I'm thinking of the person who makes his living at adult education, broadly speaking; but increasingly we ought to be doing a better job in training. We are gradually coming to see the professional adult educator as one who had professional training in education and especially in adult education.

> [A professional adult educator] is an employed person; if young, formally trained; if older, with experience.

As might be anticipated, this emphasis on training on the part of some leaders in the field does not sit well with those who feel a close identification with the field but who do not have the training they speak of. Comments such as the following generally were spoken with a good deal of resentment.

> Yes, [the title of adult educator] does apply to me both because of my position and because of the way I feel about adult education. I'm a professional adult educator, too, although some people in the colleges would give me an argument on this.

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> I would assume that [professional adult educator] means one specifically trained not only as an educator, but as an educator of adults. I know what this is because I'm not one.

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> When people call me a veteran [in adult education] I have the feeling that it means I'm not a professional, I haven't had the right courses. I don't feel that these symbols are important.

Although earning one's living in adult education and training of one sort or another were the most frequently mentioned criteria of being a professional adult educator, other criteria were also mentioned, such as the type of position held in adult education (especially administration or teaching), dedication or commitment to the field, and the type of program operated (especially formal programs). Such criteria are interesting in their attempt to find a substitute for training as the distinguishing characteristic of a professional.

Some may consider the foregoing discussion only a semantic problem. However, arguments about what is a professional adult educator are currently going on in the field, and beneath the emotionalism the term may arouse lie some very real problems, such as: Should adult education become a profession? Does it hurt the field to make such distinctions among the various people involved in it? and, Does formal training in adult education increase a worker's competence in the field?

Professionalization and the AEA

Having isolated some of the problems involved in the professionalization of adult education, the authors are not in a position to offer solutions. The decision as to whether adult education should strive for increased professional status, and whether the AEA should play a role in such an attempt, must be determined by those involved and with due consideration for the consequences for the field. In thinking about this problem, however, the following points may be taken into account.

First, it may be noted that since the great majority of the members of the AEA are paid adult educators, it seems more realistic to think of the AEA as pursuing professional goals rather than attempting to become a social action movement. However, because a relatively small proportion of the members hold full-time positions in the field and because many members appear interested in the AEA primarily as a source of publications and interpersonal contacts with other adult educators, the membership does not seem to be one ideally suited for the development of the AEA into a professional society. Nevertheless, if the field of adult education continues to grow and if pressures for professionalization increase, a professional society may possibly grow within the AEA. In other fields, at least, professional societies have tended to develop out of broader organizations, and the problem of trying to reconcile professional goals with broader goals has been settled by the development of separate organizations.

Second, it would seem that an attempt to move simultaneously toward the establishment of a profession of adult education and the building of a social action movement of adult education would be unwise. While the former goal would imply a membership composed primarily of full-time paid adult educators, the drawing of important status distinctions within the field and an emphasis on conservatism or neutrality in stands on public issues, attempts to build a social action movement would imply a broadly based membership, the playing down of status distinctions to achieve cohesion, and a willingness to take more decisive and forthright stands in controversial situations. Needless to say, however, professional goals do not conflict significantly with an emphasis on adult education as a specific educational movement. Nor does the foregoing imply that subgroups (with differing conceptions of what adult education is or should be) may not co-exist within the AEA. It does mean, however, that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to attempt to mobilize the entire AEA for both goals simultaneously.

Third, if the authors are correct in their assessment of the current professional status of adult education, the most valuable steps toward increased professionalization at the present time would seem to lie not with the most controversial aspects of professionism, such as setting up accrediting machinery, enforcing uniform training, and developing professional codes, but with development of a larger body of knowledge about adult education and adult learning, with dissemination of this knowledge to the practitioners in the field and with attempts to inform others of the specific skills which the practitioners hold. Thus the soundest program for professionalization appears to be one which need not run contrary to the interests of those adult educators who are not concerned with increased professional status.

Chapter XII

DIRECTION FINDING

"No organization has ever undergone more of the ineffectual, wrong-headed kinds of self-inquiry than AEA has," wrote an internationally known adult educator when told of the present study of the AEA. Whether this harsh judgement is justified or not, it is a fact that from the very first meeting of the Delegate Assembly of the AEA there has been a more or less continuous activity known as "direction finding." In the forecast of problems for the Delegate Assembly pro tem to act upon, one of the four basic items listed was:

"What can be done to enable the Association continuously to evaluate its purposes, structure and operations?"[1] The concept of "continuous direction finding" was popular with the early leadership and was held to be one element in maintaining the democratic operation of the Association. To this end there have been a whole series of studies, some by questionnaire, some by interview, some by "consultative committees."

Because of the close connection in the minds of AEA leaders between direction finding and the democratic processes by which directions were to be discovered, there will be repetition in some topics discussed between parts of this chapter and one or two others in this report. In fact, since direction finding represents one of the outstanding joint enterprises of the AEA, the ways in which its effectiveness has been thwarted will serve to illustrate how the weaknesses of the organization mentioned throughout this report forestall cooperation and goal achievement. Therefore, while we are here interested in direction finding efforts as such, the reader should bear in mind that other large scale efforts of the AEA may have suffered because of the same problems centering on direction finding. The present chapter, then, will serve both to illustrate general problems as they affect a specific undertaking, and to explicate a prominent AEA activity, just as in Chapter VIII the focus was on the efforts to operate the AEA and its total program democratically.

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[1] Adult Education, vol. II, no. 1, Oct. 1951, pp. 2-3.

Malcolm Knowles, executive director of the AEA, reviewed the direction finding processes of the Association at length in 1957.[2] One effort of this sort was conducted from 1952 over a period of some years by a committee on Social Philosophy and Direction Finding. This was based on promoting discussions among members and related groups. A Development Committee in 1954 presented a different set of suggestions. Advisory committees made appraisals of specific needs for the CNO and NAPSAE in 1952 and 1956 respectively. In the latter year a small conference explored issues inherent in direction finding from the point of view of philosophies of adult education. Questionnaire studies were conducted covering characteristics and needs of the AEA membership in 1953 and 1956, and of Adult Leadership readers in 1953. Also in 1956 a "Paths of Life for the AEA" experimental study was made. The membership was asked to react to two proposed paths, one in the direction of greater centralization, the other looking toward greater local autonomy.

There have also been efforts or proposals to study patterns of relationships that adult educators "want, need and can profit by, and to study adult education in relation to social trends." The AEA's money raising potential was also examined by a professional concern. Finally, a Study Commission on Direction Finding held at least one session of several days. A staff study prepared for this Commission states that previous direction finding efforts had been "greatly influenced" by "personalities and strong vested interests."

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[2] Malcolm Knowles, "Direction Finding Processes in the AEA." Adult Education, Autumn 1957 and pamphlet reprint, Chicago: Adult Education Association, 1957, 18 pp.

Originally and in theory the direction finding was to be just that--an effort to find the road the AEA should travel, rather than a final definition of goals to be arrived at. It was to be a process through and by which it was hoped that the heterogeneous membership could be brought to think more broadly as to the purposes and functions of the AEA. This objective was not understood by most members and, bluntly, the scheme did not work. Even at best, as seen by quite a number of interviewees and other members, this process has, to say the least, outlived its usefulness. Five interviewees, when asked to name the chief purposes of the AEA, replied, "to study itself," and another said most emphatically, "This ought to be the last study of the AEA for at least ten years." These and similar comments reflect the desire of many persons that the AEA "settle down and get to work."

The differences, strains and conflicts in the direction finding efforts of the AEA, of course, grew out of the varying history, practices and philosophies of the many groups engaged in adult education in the United States and especially those instrumental in the founding of the AEA. A reading of the documents and of the reports of the annual conferences and meetings of the Delegate Assembly indicates that the differences on the one hand concerned the philosophy, methods and techniques of adult education itself, and on the other the objectives, structure and policies of the AEA itself.

Obstacles to Direction Finding

Lack of Clarity in Field. The continuous efforts of the AEA to formulate its objectives, thus far not crystallized, reflect the lack of accepted standards in the field, the absence of agreed upon concepts, and the conflicts in philosophy and even methods. The lack of clarity is shown in the uncertainty in defining adult education evident in the first chapter, and again in the discussion of whether or not adult education is a social movement and of the desirability of building a profession of adult educators. The various direction finding efforts have brought a profusion and confusion of counsel never screened through a recognized basic structure with defined lines of responsibility and authority because none such existed, and even its desirability was a matter of inquiry if not of debate.

This lack of clarity in the field and in the AEA is not a unique discovery of the authors of this report. In discussing the weaknesses of the AEA, over half the interviewees stated that it was too uncertain as to its role and philosophy, too diffuse and too "up in the clouds." An additional five persons charged that the AEA was more concerned with itself than with adult education.

As a previous study by the Bureau of Applied Social Research has noted, vagueness with respect to objectives and lack of consensus with respect to procedures in any organization makes it easier for a purposeful minority to gain control. If the interviewees are to be believed, this has happened within the AEA. Such a situation also makes for non-participation among the rank and file of the membership[3] and eventually for a loss in membership that may extend beyond the period of minority control.

Agency Centered Thinking. It is all too apparent from a reading of the free response answers on the questionnaires that there is a tendency on the part of some members to view the whole field from the point of view of their own interests or organization.[4] This has been perhaps one reason for the alleged sterility of the direction finding efforts. In fact, the rationalization of these efforts, as required by the democratic processes to which the leadership felt committed, may have become an excuse for lack of definitive action, a reason for not coming to grips with the ideological arguments in the field. As long as questions could be asked and discussed the embarrassment of making decisions, where there was a majority and not a consensus, could be avoided. Perhaps part of the AEA's difficulties have resulted from treating democratic objectives in literal--or better, ritualistic--fashion, rather than rationally.

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[3] Cf. Sills, The Volunteers, p. 35.

[4] For instance, this comment: "Our library's started a Great Books group. What business have they to do that? The school should have sole responsibility for adult education."

It is, of course, also true that the lower the degree of satisfaction with an organization among its members, the more active is the search for alternatives among those interested. The less charitable explanation advanced above is also a recognizable organizational phenomenon and seems the more appropriate since the direction finding efforts summarized have spanned the entire history of the AEA and appear to have had scant influence on actual operations.

Organizational Jealousies. One block to effective direction finding was a considerable degree of actual interorganizational or intergroup jealousy which inhibited interpretation of the results of some direction finding studies and even more prevented action. A considerable number of the interviewees held that one of the weaknesses of the AEA was poor handling of divided loyalties existing among the members and of personal ambitions of the leaders of groups and organizational factions. About two-thirds of the interviewees in effect complained that:

> The AEA has been dominated by a succession of cliques and factions. We have suffered from one power group after another.[5]

This unfortunate situation is doubtless a reflection of the basic insecurities of adult educators and of the marginal status of the field in many institutions. A minority of adult educators are sufficiently disturbed about the development of their field that they feel uncomfortable if positions of power in the national organization, such as membership on the Executive Committee and chairmanships of other important committees, are not shared in disproportionately by their own familiar group. This perhaps is a danger in any national organization that includes as many diverse interests as does the AEA. It sometimes results, however, in opposition to an idea or an operational change, not because it is inherently unwise but because of its sponsors. The inhibiting result of such attitudes on the profitable use of direction finding activities needs no elaboration.[6]

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[5] Interestingly enough so far as organizational groups go, very few escape the charge of seeking to dominate the AEA. One in ten accuses the public school group of dark designs. One in twelve is fearful of the professors of adult education, who comprise less than one-half of 1 per cent of the membership. Nor does university extension personnel appear above suspicion to others.

[6] It is interesting to compare almost contemporaneous developments in another field, Rural Sociology, with those in adult education. In the 1910's most of the very small amount of work in this area was being done by sociologically trained churchmen. State colleges of agriculture paid increasing attention to the field but it occupied a marginal position, often being located in the department of agricultural economics. State teachers colleges and liberal arts colleges came to give equally marginal attention to it, usually on a part-time basis. Demands for practical applications, especially by agricultural college administrators, resulted in the development of applied rural sociologists in the Extension Service. It could have become a fifth group. In terms of their own needs each of these groups and a few others not mentioned had different immediate objectives. All, however, occupied marginal status in their institutions and agencies. The result was a united front among these groups which placed the interests of rural sociology as such in the position of supreme importance. All rural sociologists worked to free the discipline from agricultural economics. All rural sociologists helped in the establishment of a dividion in the subject in the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and perhaps more significant, the few hundred rural sociologists worked (cont.)

Structure of the AEA. Some difficulties of the separated offices of the AEA were dealt with earlier in this report. Direction finding has also been affected by this physical separation. However, NAPSAE and CNO are in existence, social facts which must certainly be considered in choosing directions for the development of adult education. Would a declaration of policy and program by the AEA be binding upon these two "sub-organizations" inasmuch as both were represented on the Executive Committee? If not, then finding the directions for the future development of adult education as such and therefore the role of the AEA in the field would seem to require some mechanism by which the school adult educators, the members of the CNO and the diverse interests represented in the AEA could all contribute. The structure that has arisen creates problems but obviously must be worked with. Even the uncertain relationships of the Delegate Assembly and the Executive Committee, discussed in Chapter VIII, invite difficulties. In direction finding as in certain other activities discussed, the lack of clear-cut definitions of functions and responsibilities gives some the impression that there are few, if any, who know what is going on.

Unwitting Influence of Fund for Adult Education. A further reason for the lack of success of the direction finding process lies in the actions of the Fund for Adult Education. This is not to suggest that it dictated to the AEA. There is no evidence of that. Operationally, however, by its very choice of the projects to support among those submitted, it greatly influenced the AEA's program. Some of the projects chosen had low priority

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6 (Continued) successfully to enable their discipline to share equally with agricultural economics and home economics in federal grants under the Purnell Act, even though these grants could be made only to state colleges of agriculture. These successes were achieved when rural sociology's organized expression was simply that of a section in the American Sociological Society.

among some of the most experienced people on the Executive Committee.[7] The support of one project which did rate very high--and still does--was withdrawn after about a year, far too short a time for the experiment to have produced definitive results. Facing this situation, some members felt direction finding was a somewhat futile procedure. Others apparently considered that the situation made it imperative that any approved project exemplify the ideological approach of which they approved.

Too many of the projects accepted were based on theories rather than experience or research, and one or two undertaken were of a type that both the experience of some organizations and sociological research indicated had small chance of success.

Ideological Differences. In many respects ideological or philosophical differences among adult educators were more serious than organizational.

So far as the interviewees identified the ideological villain, the proponents of Group Dynamics were easily in first place. About two-fifths charged that this group sought to dominate the AEA and laid other misfortunes at its door. Some typical comments follow:

> The AEA went to hell by way of Bethel, Maine. (Location of the National Training Laboratory for Group Dynamics)
>
> - - - - -
>
> The group dynamics clique did the AEA great harm. Their dynamos weren't connected with anything. Their whirr produced a great noise but no results.
>
> - - - - -
>
> /The AEA/ was hurt by overemphasis on group dynamics /and their/ assumption that there was only one approach to adult education.

As noted in Chapter VII, many who criticized the proponents of group dynamics within the AEA believed that this phase was over but that it was historically important in understanding subsequent difficulties, especially the sterility of direction finding efforts. Viewed in perspective, it seems that the conflict over group dynamics is perhaps more significant as a symbol of some of the problems of the AEA than it is as an intellectual argument. Sociologists have studied groups at least since Cooley's work half a century ago. No one who has given any thought to the behavior of human groups would deny that groups have dynamics. The reaction against "group dynamics" within the AEA seems to have arisen when those who had developed a point of view about, and techniques for guiding the behavior of, groups began to assume that their procedures were applicable to every phase of adult education and capable of solving most of the problems of the AEA itself and of determining its future direction. In the enthusiasm for the results accruing from a somewhat new and fruitful approach to the study of groups, research findings were generalized far beyond warrantable limits by persons who failed fully to grasp the meaning of what the researchers were doing and the qualifications they were making. The attendant reaction was only to be expected.

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[7] Though the authors do not have direct evidence on the point, it should be added that as reported by several interviewees, the Fund for Adult Education also went along with supporting some AEA projects as to the value of which it was doubtful.

Content versus Process. Closely related to the group dynamics controversy were two others which handicapped effective direction finding.

Oversimplifying, the first may be illustrated by the debate between those who desire precisely defined ends and goals for adult education activities and those to whom the results of group or class interaction, the social processes attendant upon the activity, are more important than the content being considered. Another way of putting this perhaps would be to say that the issue is whether the primary objective of an adult education activity is what the individual gains from it in terms of a new skill, new learning, new attitudes, or whether the primary objective is the improvement of group processes and of gains in objectivity and tolerance within the group. Is practical knowledge more to be stressed than theory, the learning process more than the content learned? It is curious in reading the literature or in the interviews, how seldom it was pointed out that none of these are mutually exclusive points of view. For example, the practical will be more important to the participant in a course in typewriting; the theoretical, say, in a Great Books group. The fact that such a statement appears to be a threat to some is another indication of the apparent insecurity of many adult educators. It also explains why unrealistic "either or" issues have handicapped the development of a generalized national adult education organization.

A Patternless Mosaic or Unifying System.[8] Threading through all the direction finding activitids of the AEA is the influence of one faction of adult educators who maintain the position that adult education should remain a patternless mosiac. The "democratic" way is given as the rationale for resisting efforts to establish common philosophic concepts and goals for adult education. This group argues that the individual should have the right and ability to choose what will be in his and society's greatest interest, given full information and free choice. They feel that the proper focus for integration, sequence and unity of learning is in the individual and that his aim should provide direction.

This faction perceives democracy and freedom as being synonymous. To a degree, this concept of democracy denies that free men can remain free and voluntarily enter multilateral agreements with their fellow men to abridge some of the individual freedoms in order to act in the interest of a group or of society as a whole.

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[8] The following seven paragraphs are a slightly eduted quotation from a source document prepared for a 1957 direction finding inquiry of the AEA. They were written by Ann Friend.

There is another group which conceives of democracy as a process by which those who must abide by given decisions have a voice in the making of them. A system or organization framework simply provides the mechanism for welding a cohesive social force through the cooperative efforts of people striving toward a common goal. This group feels that if the development of educational opportunities is left to integration through the aims of individuals it is reasonable to expect that the results will continue to be highly fragmentary and of little social significance.

There is some data to support the premise that unless individuals are provided direction and motivation for and a vision of the value of further learning, there is little possibility of their progressing very far beyond the boundaries set by their own backgrounds and daily experiences. Interests tend to center around what a person already knows or has experienced, and few are able to conceptualize potentialities for learning in new directions without guidance. Thus, the education of adults may be perceived as voluntary and self-integrated, but individuals require the help of intelligent guidance and perhaps a system of planned opportunities that would enable all adults better to fulfill their total responsibilities and potentialities.

There is some reason to believe that the exponents of a diversified, non-directed system are basically concerned with protecting their leadership roles within a community and their own occupational or professional prestige. In view of the conflicting concepts of educational objectives, this is an oversimplification of the problem. However, to justify lack of a unifying system on the basis of its being undemocratic seems to ignore certain generally accepted principles of democratic organization. It further inhibits reaching effective decisions as to directions or objectives for an organization like the AEA.

The very nature of a voluntary association requires that it protect the vested interests of those whose contributions give it life. Members join and participate to the degree that they are able to identify with the aims of the organization and to adopt them as their own. The elective and appointive representatives functioning as the management of the association must strive impartially to determine the members' desires and to act accordingly, if the vitality of the association as an effective working democracy is to be preserved. It is the function of the association management to work out a structure of responsibilities and relationships designed to keep in balance the inherent conflicts of objectives of a broad-based, diversified membership. The leaders must continuously guide, reconcile, and interpret the various points of view to the several opposing groups without substituting private interests.

The fact that an organization has a power structure, elected officers, policies, rules and regulations that may limit individual freedom to act and that some members have more voice than others, does not in itself make an association undemocratic. The organization must provide for the interaction of individuals within a clearly defined structure. These patterns of interaction need to be based on the idea that each member has a right as well as a responsibility to contribute to the furthering of the common goals, commensurate with his own knowledge, skills and understanding. Integration requires internal communications among the constituent elements with the clearly defined limits.

. . . . . .

It seems fair to say that because of the vigor with which both vested interests and the conflicting concepts of various groups within the AEA have been defended, compromises have resulted which have been so vague in their statement as to increase the lack of clarity already noted and operationally to have resulted in conflicting procedures. Some of the contradictory and uninformed statements of interviewees about the organizational structure of the AEA probably stem from this fact.

It is all too clear that the AEA has never thus far generated an all encompassing concern to which those with various interests and affiliations could give loyalty without in their own minds compromising loyalty to their institutions and/or to their personal hopes or ambitions either for themselves or for adult education. This is the more curious to the authors, as outsiders, because of the high ideals and hopes adult educators have for their field as shown in Chapter II. Perhaps this is the most serious criticism that can be made of the AEA but the evidence of more or less constant unresolved conflict, with the sterility in decision making it seems to have caused, warrants no softer judgement.

Some Case Illustrations. In view of statements made in this chapter it may be worth while to illustrate some of the difficulties by a critical examination of statements made by the Delegate Assembly or by direction finding groups and apparently accepted by the membership. The first of these relates to ideology, the second to the organization. The authors wish to emphasize that the objectives or policies selected for criticism are in themselves laudable. The effort is simply to show that whether because of compromises or otherwise, an apparent failure to think through all the implications has contributed to lack of clarity and misunderstanding. This frequently invites opposition.

"The focus of adult education is the local community," the Delegate Assembly once declared. This statement should certainly reassure those who fear a strong centralized association that would usurp the prerogatives of autonomous local associations or councils—a highly unrealistic fear in the present situation of the AEA. The community development projects sponsored by the AEA were a natural activity in view of this statement. Community development is stated to include "promotion of business and industry, city planning and other special aspects of community life." There are, of course, professional personnel available in many of these areas. What responsibility beyond offering help on educational materials and techniques do adult educators have in such matters? The place of adult education is not made clear. Some of the statements led professionals to think adult educators were preempting their own specialized fields.

An analysis of some of the materials relating to community development as an adult education activity raised certain other questions:

Should the local community be the paramount interest of adult education?

Should intellectual interests of individuals be local or should they be encouraged to transcend the local community? When services of teachers or professors are solicited by community groups on perhaps a wide variety of practical problems and this service is called educational, does this deprive the term of its special meaning? Since all experience provides some occasion for learning, what is the ultimate aim and role of adult education in the process of learning? When the role of adult education is seen to be community rather than individually centered and is oriented toward solving specific social problems, is it education or is it something else? Can a community learn or is learning an individual process? Certainly the fact that community development calls for education and indeed cannot be soundly based or achieved without it is no reason for calling community development adult education. Clearer definition of the role of adult education in community development would help both communities and education.

A careful reading of the publications, committee reports and actions of the Delegate Assembly would enable one to marshall statements that would support almost any answer to the questions asked above.

To take one other illustration. In 1956 the Delegate Assembly directed a shift away "from building an organization to serving a movement." It declared, "If adult education is to make a serious impact on our culture it must grow up fast; it must rapidly become an integrated, popular movement." This last phrase would seem to imply that adult education had not yet become a "movement" although a year or two earlier both the Executive Committee and the Delegate Assembly declared that there was one and that "a national organization concerned with the general development of adult education" should be its "organizational expression," and not merely "a professional society of interagency planning." It is legitimate to inquire whether if, in fact, an adult education movement exists, it is possible to serve it when there is only a modicum of agreement as to program or as to what the movement is and where it is going.

One adult educator who has made important contributions to his area of adult education said:

> The AEA is not a movement seeking a voice but a voice seeking a movement.

This is perhaps another way of saying that such a core group as the Delegate Assembly has put its hopes and ambitions for adult education into statements that are not meaningful in operational terms and therefore are not helpful in direction finding. How, for instance, is adult education "to grow fast?" Does adult education here refer to the AEA, to other organizations or to the growing number of millions of participants in adult education activities?

More than once as an outsider readsthe record, it appears as if the Delegate Assembly had either been considering the wrong issues or had avoided hard decisions by taking refuge in statements of high level aspiration. Laudable as such aspirations are, it is fairly well established that when aspiration too far exceeds possible achievement in reaching goals, frustration or worse results. This interferes with deciding upon taking such practical and effective steps, including innovations, as the situation may demand.

It is also difficult to reconcile the call for the AEA to be "more than a professional society for interagency planning" with a 1956 Executive Committee action directing that membership recruitment efforts should be aimed toward "first, full-time adult educators and professional workers in related fields . . .; second, professional workers who are performing part-time roles in the education of adults; and third, other persons who work full or part-time at organizing, administering or conducting adult education activities."[9] This action apparently limits recruitment to professional personnel. If this is to be determinative, the policies and programs of the AEA must obviously meet the needs of such persons rather than those of volunteer workers. At the same time more than half the interviewees are entirely willing, even eager, to admit interested volunteers to membership, and in October, 1958, 12 per cent of the members held unpaid volunteer posts in adult education.

The lack of clarity in the expression of preferred directions for the AEA, the organizational and ideological differences, and the effort to provide for continuous evaluation so used as to keep affairs too much in a state of flux appear to be the chief handicaps to effective direction finding.

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[9] Adult Leadership, vol. 5, no. 10, p. 3.

From one point of view the "continuous" direction finding was not continuous in the sense that the various efforts were unrelated and did not build on any previous one, and there did not emerge from any one of these any common symbols or meanings that could be used to arouse the loyalty of the membership. It is a truism of successful social organization that such symbols, standing for recognized goals, are effective in building loyalty and harmony. Unity in a generalized agency in any broad and varied field is probably unnecessary if not unobtainable. Harmony, however, is essential in the sense that permits diversity but prevents dominance by specific interests or groups because of common adherence to basic principles applicable to all related interests.

Despite obstacles to "direction finding" both the questionnaires and the interviews showed a considerable degree of agreement as to what the purposes and goals of a generalized adult education agency should be, enough agreement, in fact, to offer a real opportunity for an effective program. Several items in a program so determined would not please some of the groups alluded to earlier in this chapter but they express the desires of large majorities of the AEA membership. The next chapter turns to a discussion of the purposes and goals of the AEA as seen by members and leaders.

Chapter XIII

PURPOSES AND GOALS OF A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION IN ADULT EDUCATION

This chapter is concerned with what the membership of the AEA believe should be its current purposes, with the eventual goals the interviewees see for a generalized national adult education agency regardless of present problems, and finally with their expectations with respect to the future of the AEA. In addition such pertinent data as were secured from ex-members and from adult educators who had never been AEA members are noted. The chapter attempts to answer the question as to what purposes and activities should, in the opinion of the respondents, receive major emphasis. It seeks to discover any differences in points of view as, for instance, between employed adult educators and volunteers, or as among those who serve contrasting types of agencies.

In an effort to answer such queries eleven possible activities for the AEA were listed in the questionnaire going to all members, which they were asked to rate as "very important," "somewhat important" or "not important." An open-ended question also provided for suggesting other activities. A comparable instrument was sent to the 51 directors of agricultural and home economics extension at the state colleges of agriculture and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. There was a 100 per cent return from these administrators who supervise the over 13,000 rural adult educators of the Cooperative Extension Service. About half of them currently were members or had been or subscribed to Adult Leadership. Finally, the whole matter of aims and goals for a national adult education organization was explored in the open-ended interviews with leaders.

Some Limitations of the Inquiry. Before turning to the substantive data bearing on these points a cautionary comment is in order. Certain limitations in the use of questionnaires are noted in Appendix A, dealing with methodology. It needs to be emphasized, however, that respondents will generally accept the frame of reference of the questionnaire designer. Thus it can make a considerable difference what items are included in an instrument of the kind employed in this inquiry. To be specific, the eleven possible activities did not suggest the desirability of the AEA's holding regional conferences or of establishing more local associations or councils. Nevertheless, both these activities were mentioned as desirable by a number of interviewees. Even though the questionnaire contained an open-ended question for suggestions of other desirable purposes, only 19 per cent availed themselves of it, and fewer than one-quarter of these listed either of the activities just noted. It is possible, however, that these and certain omitted activities might have had considerable support if they had been specifically included. On the other hand it is fair to point out that the interviewees gave high priority to a number of activities and purposes which received considerable support from the membership.

The authors believe the data presented in this chapter are suggestive of the directions close to half the AEA's membership wish the association to travel, and that the interviewees' judgements as to goals should receive careful consideration in terms of a longer range program as soon as finances permit.

Purposes and Priorities. It is clear from Table 80 that the membership as a whole believed that all of the eleven activities listed in the questionnaire were of some importance. Only on one item, k, did less than two-thirds fail to see the suggested activity as very or somewhat important.

The most pressing needs of the membership are clear from their replies. The two most important activities are b (conduct and promote research related to adult education and adult leadership) and c (disseminate practical techniques of adult education and leadership). Just over and just under four-fifths of the respondents so declare. As a further refinement the membership were asked to indicate the three activities out of the eleven they deemed most important for a national organization at the present time. The conduct and promotion of adult education research was again in first place, chosen by 61 per cent of the respondents, closely followed by dissemination of practical techniques with 58 per cent. No other item was selected by as many as two-fifths of the members, seven being chosen by less than one-fourth. Item a in the table was given top priority by 39 per cent and item e by 30 per cent. This last is clearly related to c, and the results of this poll indicate unmistakably the considerable need for practical help and guidance which the members of the AEA feel.

If these adult educators can speak for the field, a successful national organization must give top priority to the promotion of research and the dissemination of tested methods in adult education, in part by fulfilling a clearing house function.

In view of earlier enthusiasm for developing adult education as a social movement and as one instrument for desirable social change,

Table 80: Importance of Each Purpose for the AEA, and Per Cent Mentioning Each Purpose Among the Three Most Important Purposes

	Degree of importance					
Purposes	Very	Some-what	Not	DK, NA	Total*	Among three most important
a) Develop a social philosophy of adult education	62%	25	6	7	100%	39%
b) Conduct and promote research related to adult education and adult leadership	81%	15	1	3	100%	61%
c) Disseminate practical techniques of adult education and leadership	79%	17	1	3	100%	58%
d) Advance adult education as a profession	50%	34	10	6	100%	22%
e) Serve as a clearing house for programs, activities, and methods for other organizations in adult education	56%	34	5	5	100%	30%
f) Work for coordination among local agencies and organizations in adult education	44%	39	12	5	100%	17%
g) Work for coordination among national agencies and organizations in adult education	59%	32	4	5	100%	20%
h) Promote adult education as a social movement	34%	34	22	10	100%	12%
i) Render advisory service to regional, state, or city councils of adult education	53%	37	4	6	100%	14%
j) Promote community development	35%	41	16	8	100%	16%
k) Develop new local agencies to provide additional educational opportunities	18%	34	37	11	100%	4%
l) Other	6%	2	--	92	100%	4%

*The base for each per cent is 2000.

the relatively low rating of item h, a topic discussed in Chapter X, is noteworthy.

The judgement of the group of directors of extension at the state colleges of agriculture is in considerable agreement with the AEA membership as to the priority tasks for a national adult education organization. Combining the dissemination and clearing house functions, about half of these 51 directors wanted a national adult education organization to render practical service of this type. Almost as many hoped for the promoting or actual conducting of research in various aspects of adult education. Among this group of extension directors there were no significant differences on these points as between current and former members of the AEA among them, or between them and those who had never been members.

Third priority among the directors was the need to bring about better coordination and more cooperation among agencies engaged in adult education on a national and/or regional level. This is a natural concern for administrative personnel but one listed as very important by three-fifths of the members, although only one-fifth gave it priority among the three most important tasks. The development of a more adequate philosophy of adult education was in third place among the total AEA membership but fourth as viewed by the directors of the state extension services.

The degree of agreement between the membership of the AEA and this special group of adult education administrators as to the desirable purposes for a national agency seems significant, especially when it is remembered that this group is wholly concerned with rural people, whereas the membership of the AEA is highly urban.

In an effort to gain a still clearer view of what the AEA membership desired from a national adult education agency, the replies dealing with judgements as to the three most important purposes or functions for such an agency were related to a number of other factors on which data were available. A few of the more important detailed tables supporting the results of this analysis are presented in this chapter; the rest are given in Appendix C. It will be useful for the reader to compare the results of some of these analyses with the judgement of the total group of respondents already given. Some of the differences appear quite significant.

Age. Age clearly influences the judgement of members as to the three most important purposes. The importance of research declines with age. Seventy per cent of those under forty years of age placed this activity in the top three; only 55 per cent of those over fifty-five years of age agreed, the forty to fifty-five year group falling in between but agreeing that research should have first priority. Interest in developing a "social philosophy of adult education" increases with age. Of the oldest group of AEA members 43 per cent regarded this purpose as one of the three most important. Of the group under forty years old only 36 per cent agreed. Again, the forty to fifty-five year olds were exactly between the two extremes. The clearing house function received a rating in the top three from one-third of the two older groups but only one-fourth of the youngest. Other differences, where they existed, were slight. These findings have some importance because of the skewed age distribution of AEA members noted in Chapter IV. Because adult education is a new field these older members are less professionalized. The younger members, however, are obviously those to whom the eventual leadership will come.

When a comparison was made according to the length of time the respondents had been AEA members, research had first priority in all groups. Dissemination of techniques was highest among recent members. Members joining in 1957-58 were proportionately twice as interested in community development aspects of adult education as those who had been members since the founding but in terms of what should receive greater emphasis than at present, research and dissemination were first and second, the development of a philosophy third.

Membership Status. The opinion of the members of the AEA on the three most important functions was given earlier in this chapter. Former members responding to this question reversed the importance of research and dissemination of practical techniques by a very narrow margin, as seen in Table 82. With this adult educators who had never been AEA members disagreed. The position they gave these two activities agreed with the judgement of the members but by sharply lower proportions. Former members were significantly less interested in developing a philosophy of adult education and in building a profession. Never members were even more emphatic on the first point but disagreed on the second, one-fifth rating building a profession of adult education as belonging in the top three, as did 22 per cent of the members. Advisory services and local coordination won proportionately half again as many votes from never members as from present and former members.

Position in Adult Education. A third comparison on this point separated full-time adult educators, full-time persons with fractional

Table 81: Three Most Important Purposes of AEA by Age Groups*

Purposes	Under 40	40 - 55	Over 55
a) Develop social philosophy	36%	40%	43%
b) Conduct, promote research	70	62	55
c) Disseminate practical techniques	63	57	62
d) Advance profession	22	23	22
e) Serve as a clearing house	26	33	32
f) Coordinate local agencies	15	18	18
g) Coordinate national agencies	20	22	18
h) Promote social movement	12	12	12
i) Render advisory service to locals	16	13	16
j) Promote community development	10	12	13
k) Develop new local agencies	4	4	4
l) Other purposes	3	4	3
	297%**	300%	298%
Base of %	(489)	(1055)	(385)

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*Those who did not answer the question concerning either purposes or age are excluded from this table.

**Totals exceed 100% because respondents were asked to check three purposes.

Table 82: Three Most Important Purposes of AEA by Membership Status*

Purposes	Members	Former Members	Non-Members
a) Develop social philosophy	40%	35%	27%
b) Conduct, promote research	62	59	54
c) Disseminate practical techniques	60	61	45
d) Advance profession	22	14	20
e) Serve as a clearing house	31	32	39
f) Coordinate local agencies	17	19	26
g) Coordinate national agencies	21	15	18
h) Promote social movement	12	13	11
i) Render advisory service to locals	14	14	21
j) Promote community development	12	15	14
k) Develop new local agencies	4	10	5
l) Other purposes	4	4	1
	299%**	291%	281%
Base of %	(1937)	(388)	(368)

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*Those who did not answer the question concerning purposes are excluded from this table.

**Totals exceed 100% because respondents were asked to check three purposes.

responsibilities for adult education, part-time workers, volunteers and persons with no present connection in the field. The ranking of the three top purposes in all these groups, shown in Table 83, conformed to the trends shown by the totals for all respondents except that proportionately only about one-third as many volunteers and persons without connections believed it important to build an adult education profession as did full and part-time adult educators. These two non-employed groups, on the other hand, were considerably more interested in having a national agency work for the coordination of local agencies than any of the three categories of employed persons. They also put research and dissemination of practical techniques among the three most important functions. However, these two less involved groups comprised only one-fifth of the respondents.

Education. As Chapter IV showed, the membership of the AEA is well educated. Of the respondents answering the question on education, less than 9 per cent had failed to complete a college course. Over two-thirds had graduate degrees. Certain clear-cut consistencies appear in Table 84 when the replies on the three most important functions for a national adult education agency are ordered by education using the following categories: Holders of doctorate, of master's, of bachelor's degrees and less than college graduation. In all groups research ranks first and dissemination of practical techniques second. However, the proportion putting research among the first three declines with the amount of education. Just under two-thirds of the holders of the doctorate listed it, 54 per cent of those who were not college graduates. The emphasis on the importance of majoring on

Table 83: Three Most Important Purposes of AEA by Type of Position Held in Adult Education*

	Type of position				
Purposes	All of full-time paid	Part of full-time paid	Part-time paid	Volunteer or unpaid	Total
a) Develop social philosophy	39%	40%	41%	37%	45%
b) Conduct, promote research	65	64	59	61	55
c) Disseminate practical techniques	54	62	49	65	60
d) Advance profession	35	18	33	12	10
e) Serve as a clearing house	31	31	33	31	27
f) Coordinate local agencies	14	18	18	20	23
g) Coordinate national agencies	22	21	23	19	18
h) Promote social movement	14	10	14	14	14
i) Render advisory service to locals	11	16	15	16	14
j) Promote community development	7	14	6	14	14
k) Develop new local agencies	3	3	2	6	8
l) Other purposes	5	2	8	4	4
	300%**	299%	301%	299%	292%
Base of %	(505)	(891)	(128)	(266)	(131)

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* Those who did not answer the questions concerning either purposes or type of position are excluded from this table.

**Totals exceed 100% because respondents were asked to check three purposes.

Table 84: Three Most Important Purposes of AEA by Educational Status of Members*

	Education			
Purposes	Doctorates	Masters	Completed college	Some college or less
a) Develop social philosophy	45%	41%	35%	29%
b) Conduct, promote research	65	64	60	54
c) Disseminate practical techniques	52	59	64	62
d) Advance profession	31	23	13	19
e) Serve as a clearing house	31	31	31	30
f) Coordinate local agencies	12	16	23	24
g) Coordinate national agencies	20	21	22	18
h) Promote social movement	12	11	13	13
i) Render advisory service to locals	12	14	17	17
j) Promote community development	9	11	12	19
k) Develop new local agencies	3	4	4	8
l) Other purposes	6	3	—	4
	298%**	298%	294%	297%
Base of %	(347)	(1042)	(372)	(169)

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*Those who did not answer the questions concerning either purposes or education are excluded from this table.

**Totals exceed 100% because respondents were asked to check three purposes.

successful techniques was in reverse order. Interest in developing a philosophy of adult education and in building a profession was directly associated with the degree of the respondent's education. The less the amount of education, the greater the desire for coordination of adult education on the local level. The desire to build a profession of adult education was, as one would expect, positively and strongly associated with the amount of education. Presumably those with graduate degrees, especially doctorates, were in universities or officers of national organizations, while more of the college graduates or less were serving adult education at the local level and hence were more conscious of competition and lack of coordination.

Regional Differences. When the responses to the question on most important functions are distributed on a regional basis, using the Northeast, South, Central States and Far West, the by now familiar preference for research first and dissemination of practical techniques second holds except in the South, where the order is reversed by a slight margin. As always, however, these two are close together, six percentage points being the largest spread. These facts may be seen in Table 85. Interest in the development of a social philosophy for adult education was considerably higher in the Northeast than elsewhere.

Personal Interests. Respondents to the questionnaire were asked to record their personal interests in adult education. This resulted in over a score of categories which, for the purpose of this analysis, were combined into six groupings.[1] The details here are not important

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[1] Cf. Chapter IV for a description of these categories.

Table 85: Three Most Important Purposes of AEA by Region of Residence*

Purposes	Northeast	South	Central	Far West
a) Develop social philosophy	44%	36%	38%	39%
b) Conduct, promote research	62	64	62	64
c) Disseminate practical techniques	60	66	56	59
d) Advance profession	21	22	23	26
e) Serve as a clearing house	30	28	33	31
f) Coordinate local agencies	15	20	20	16
g) Coordinate national agencies	20	18	22	23
h) Promote social movement	15	10	11	12
i) Render advisory service to locals	15	14	15	4
j) Promote community development	12	14	11	10
k) Develop new local agencies	4	6	5	2
l) Other purposes	4	2	4	4
	302%**	298%	300%	290%
Base of %	(600)	(264)	(683)	(366)

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*Those who did not answer the questions concerning purposes and those residing in Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico are excluded from this table.

**Totals exceed 100% because respondents were asked to check three purposes.

since all six groups with a minor exception agreed on the ranking of the three most important functions. All placed the conduct or promotion of research first and the dissemination of practical techniques second, in three of the six groups with only two percentage points or less difference. Development of a philosophy of adult education was a poor third in all groups except that engaged in remedial adult education, where it dropped to fifth.

Organization of Respondent. The most important functions for a national adult education organization were also analyzed according to the agency of the respondents' primary responsibility, using thirteen categories.[2] As seen in Table 86, research was in first place in eight of these and shared first with dissemination of techniques in one. This latter category was given first priority by workers in civic or business organizations and by those lacking an organizational connection, about one-tenth of those responding. The proportion of persons in these groups giving research top priority ranged from 51 to 74 per cent, the latter figure interestingly enough being recorded by the adult educators in the field of religion. Dissemination of techniques was mentioned by from 51 to 72 per cent. Foundation executives as a group, 15 of whom responded to the member's questionnaire, are included among the all others in this analysis. It is of passing interest to note that in this small group research was rated in the top three by less than one-half. It seems, therefore, that at least some of the foundation personnel have an image of the role of a generalized national adult education organization which differs from the needs of the field as seen by the membership of the

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[2] Excluding those failing to list their primary organization.

Table 86: Three Most Important Purposes of AEA by Primary Agency for Selected Agencies*

Purposes	Civic or frat.	Church or relig.	Business, indus.	Youth serving	Health or welfare	No organ.	Labor union	Univ. ext.	Other coll., univ.	Public school	Agri. ext.	Libraries	Other
a) Develop social philosophy	33%	41%	34%	38%	39%	39%	35%	37%	39%	40%	50%	27%	46%
b) Conduct, promote research	60	74	63	66	63	54	65	73	65	59	61	53	51
c) Disseminate practical techniques	72	70	70	66	62	59	59	59	57	55	52	52	51
d) Advance profession	7	10	16	9	14	12	18	33	32	43	32	13	22
e) Serve as clearing house	34	29	40	34	30	31	(59)	36	32	27	⑰	41	36
f) Coordinate local agencies	21	14	21	21	21	26	—	9	12	15	24	34	15
g) Coordinate national agencies	24	15	16	22	22	20	12	22	16	20	28	35	22
h) Promote social movement	9	13	15	9	12	11	24	9	16	11	12	7	12
i) Render advisory service to locals	10	14	16	16	15	16	—	13	17	15	11	12	14
j) Promote community development	19	10	4	14	16	12	18	4	7	10	11	18	13
k) Develop new local agencies	5	6	9	1	5	10	—	2	2	3	—	5	5
l) Other purposes	3	3	3	1	1	4	12	4	5	4	3	2	9
	297%**	299%	307%	297%	300%	294%	302%	301%	300%	302%	301%	299%	296%
Base of %	(58)	(196)	(67)	(170)	(215)	(90)	(17)	(169)	(168)	(269)	(111)	(102)	(166)

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*Agencies are arranged according to the per cent mentioning (c), disseminate practical techniques. Also, those not answering the questions concerning either purposes or agency are excluded from this table.

**Totals exceed 100% because respondents were asked to check three purposes.

only such organization. It should be added, however, that six of these persons did place both research and dissemination among the top priority items.

One interesting difference that developed from this analysis was with respect to the importance of developing an adult education profession. This was mentioned by from 7 to 16 per cent in seven of the groups that contained about one-half of all respondents and by just under and just over 20 per cent of those in two groups having about one-tenth. In the other four groups this purpose was rated in the top three by from 32 to 43 per cent. In ascending order these groups were those in agricultural and home economics extension, colleges and universities (non-extension), university extension, and public school adult educators. This is one of the largest differences in priority ratings that emerged from this analysis. For the most part those AEA members giving a low priority to building a profession of adult education were employed by religious and welfare organizations, by libraries, businesses and foundations. Their security would inhere in such organizations, not in the adult education tasks to which they were assigned. In colleges and universities, on the other hand, and especially in the public schools,[3] full-time educators, particularly if concerned with administration, have serious problems in achieving the necessary status for adult education which will permit an orderly development of the program and long range planning. In the schools, especially, adult education is very often a marginal and expendable activity. Building a profession with all that implies, as discussed in Chapter XI, would strengthen its status. The concern of these groups with this point is clearly understandable.

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[3] _Cf._ Clark, _op. cit._

Interest and Involvement. Two final steps were taken in this analysis. Respondents were asked to indicate their degree of interest in the AEA under one of the following categories: very interested, moderately, slightly, not interested. Only 5 per cent of the respondents fell in the last category. The opinion of the members in these groups as to priority purposes was then analyzed. Some significant findings emerge, such as:

The greater the degree of interest in the AEA, the lower the rating given to research.

The greater the degree of interest in the AEA, the lower the rating given to dissemination of practical techniques and to clearing house functions, and the higher the rating given to the development of a philosophy of adult education and of a profession of adult education as priority purposes. Even so, research rated in first place except among those "not interested."

When the question was put as to which of the purposes should have more emphasis than at present, research ranked first in all four groups but among the "very interested" building a profession was in second place. In the other three groups dissemination of techniques occupied its usual second place position. It was quite clear from this analysis, however, that the greater the interest the greater the demands made upon the AEA.

Finally, ideas about priority functions were analyzed according to the highest degree of involvement a member had attained under four categories:

Current or past member of Executive Committee
Current or past member of Delegate Assembly or a committee
Attendant at one or more conferences and no other involvement
None of these

This analysis, especially when taken with the previous one, gives food for thought. The top priority for members of the Executive Committee is developing a social philosophy of adult education. Research is in second place, building a profession in third, dissemination of practical techniques rates fourth, just above coordinating national agencies. Significantly no one of these purposes achieves a rating as high as 50 per cent. As the degree of involvement decreases, the concern with research, with the dissemination of practical techniques, and to some extent with clearing house functions increases, the first two sharply. Conversely interest in philosophy, building a profession and national coordination declines.

As already noted, the AEA membership approves all eleven purposes listed as very important or important. There can be no criticism of the Executive Committee if its members wish to develop a philosophy of adult education as a service to the movement. It is a fair question, however, especially in view of the adult education belief that participants should be offered what conforms to their interests, whether the Executive Committee and those "very interested" in the AEA have let their particular interests turn them too far from the needs of the majority and from the services this majority expected. If so, this may be one reason for the difficulties of the Association. As another Bureau of Applied Social Research organizational study has pointed out, there is always a danger that those to whom authority is delegated may develop interests of their own and neglect the initial goals of the organization as perceived by the membership. When and if this happens members lose interest, reduce participation and may eventually allow their membership to lapse.[4]

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[4] Sills, The Volunteers, pp. 20-21.

Table 87: Three Most Important Purposes of AEA by Level of Involvement in the AEA[*]

Purposes	Exec. Comm.	Dele. Assem. or other comm. mem.	Conference attendees	None of these
a) Develop social philsophy	47%	39%	42%	39%
b) Conduct, promote research	45	60	58	65
c) Disseminate practical techniques	37	49	53	64
d) Advance profession	43	32	31	18
e) Serve as a clearing house	27	32	30	31
f) Coordinate local agencies	16	18	13	18
g) Coordinate national agencies	35	26	21	19
h) Promote social movement	14	11	14	11
i) Render advisory service to locals	16	16	12	15
j) Promote community development	4	10	15	11
k) Develop new local agencies	—	3	4	4
l) Other purposes	14	4	4	3
	298%[**]	300%	297%	298%
Base of %	(49)	(230)	(325)	(1333)

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[*] Members are here classified by the highest degree of involvement they had at any time.

[**] Totals exceed 100% because respondents were asked to check three functions.

One further comment should be made. It concerns the replies to the unstructured question with respect to the purposes of a national adult education agency. It will be recalled that only about one-fifth of the respondents made comments. The largest single group asked for more emphasis or service for their particular interest. A considerable proportion of the replies expressed laudable aims but of a completely impractical nature in organizational terms, such as "Know what is needed for the future" and "Develop an awareness of the world among members so that freedom, peace and the welfare of all are personal and group goals." While about 5 per cent of these persons called for more effective promotion of adult education and almost as many for more service on the local level, the majority of the replies to this unstructured question showed little or no awareness of problems common to all areas of adult education or of the feasible limits of operation, even with adequate funds, of an organization like the AEA.

Goals for the AEA. The discussion turns now to the judgements of the interviewees with respect to the role of a national adult education organization. These persons were asked both to discuss the major aims of the AEA and to suggest goals. It is evident from a reading of these interviews that the respondents did not always differentiate between these two, and also that some replied in terms of their own sector of adult education rather than in terms of the total field. As would be expected, the interview situation, especially in the discussion of goals, resulted in a far larger number of suggestions than came from our open-end item on the questionnaire. It is also clear that in discussing goals in terms of a long term program, many respondents accepted as necessary elements in the present program of the AEA. These various factors result in a larger degree of agreement between what many interviewees and respondents gave as the current purposes of the AEA and their image of eventual goals than would perhaps have been the case if these had been more sharply differentiated. This agreement, however, emphasizes the value of the suggestions from the point of view of determining program.

Two goals stand out among all those listed, each with about half again as many mentions as the goal seen as ranking third in importance, and twice as many or more mentions as fourth or lower choices.

The two top priority and equally important goals for the interviewees are:

1. Promote or conduct research. This is seen as a "desperate need" by some. "There is so very much we need to know. There is little assured factual foundation for much adult educators do."

2. Give field service to build up regional, state or local adult education organizations, a matter discussed in more detail earlier in this report. In this respect they differ in second choice from those answering the questionnaire, who rated dissemination of practical techniques almost as high as research. It appears obvious that the leaders represented by the interviewees were thinking more in organizational or structural terms, while the respondents desire help in their jobs.

> Field services should be given to regional, state and local associations. This might include training for officers to help them build their own organization. So many people are inexperienced in adult education. The AEA should do something to strengthen the field.

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> The AEA should engage in field services. It ought to have enough staff to work with state and local organizations in adult education. This field staff should be available for speaking but also to sit down and counsel with leaders. This judgement is based on experience in field work both for the AEA and especially that of its predecessor organization.

Working for greater recognition of the field by the general public stands third on the list of goals, though a considerable number of the respondents classify this as a current activity of the AEA.

Choices with respect to other desirable goals for a national generalized organization in adult education fall into two general categories. The first of these relates to some broad, overall objectives. The second is concerned with practical, service activities. Thus many interviewees hope that a national organization can promote the purposes and overall activities common to all adult education agencies, hence permitting each specialized agency to deal with its particular situation. Again a number of interviewees believed that a national organization should devote some of its efforts to developing adult educators into a recognized profession. Smaller numbers wanted attention paid to constructing a better definition of the field of adult education than now exists and to developing a clearer philosophy.

In the other category the dissemination and clearing house function led, along with calls for assistance in leadership training on local and state levels, and attention to building programs for the aged and for community development. Not one of these suggestions was made by as many as one in six of the interviewees. A dozen other suggestions for goals were offered by from one to three persons. Among these suggestions were the following: Build up sections of the AEA, lessen sense of difference between adult educators using formal and informal methods, improve materials in adult education, establish a consulting service, secure funds from tax sources, hold a national congress or White House Conference.

This portrayal of the goals held by the interviewees may well close with two more general comments, both suggestive of goals rather than immediate practical purposes.

> I would like to see the AEA a pioneering, experimental organization in training adult educators through conferencing, meetings, publications, etc. It should find areas where our knowledge of people and of learning are not used and develop these. It should do research in such areas, as for instance the effects of social organization factors on learning or on the application of knowledge. . . . There needs to be some ballast for these activities. . . . Here the services to members are important.

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> The AEA should be the voice of continuing education, even a missionary approach concerned with human beings and their potentialities for growth and with the protection of the basic freedoms on which continuing education rests.
>
> It should give constant attention to the improvement of the craft, not usual methods. A deeply insightful approach is needed, not narrow professionalism I hope we won't have.

In terms of the present membership there is therefore little doubt as to the three or four top priority items desired by the membership of the AEA and by the leaders of adult education who were interviewed. Beyond these few items on which maximum agreement exists, there is considerable difference as to the priority that should be assigned to the several proposed activities, but fortunately general agreement as to the importance of most of the items considered. Moreover, the detailed tables show the strength and character of the support for various goals.

Within available budgets these data and the high degree of consensus on a few items furnish a starting point for building the program and defining the role of a generalized national organization in adult education.

Realistic Possibilities. As a final step the interviewees were asked to appraise as realistically as possible the probable future of the AEA. In contrast to their almost unbounded optimism with respect to the future of adult education, recorded in Chapter II, the interviewees answered this query conservatively. They were not willing to forecast that within a few years the AEA would attain the goals just set forth for a national generalized adult education agency. Four even doubted if the AEA could survive.

The explanation of the pessimism of the few and the conservatism of the rest is doubtless in part colored by the situation in which the AEA found itself at the time of this study. For a second time a general national adult education organization had lost foundation support. The year had closed with a sizable deficit and the budget was not in balance. The first and only director the AEA had had since its organization had resigned. His successor, though appointed, had not yet taken office. Uncertainties of such a character would not breed unbounded optimism.

About one in six of the interviewees see the AEA continuing about as it now is with a growth within two or three years variously estimated as resulting in 7,000 to 10,000 members. About one in four, without forecasting future membership, would otherwise agree with this diagnosis except that they look for more concreteness and less diffuseness in the program. The views of this group are fairly represented by the following composite statement drawn from four interviewees:

> The AEA will stop shooting off in all directions at once. It will focus on more modest and concrete goals such as working on problems common to the whole field, building up state and local associations and its own sections, which will become more important--in short, giving practical service to a membership that will inevitably become more professional in character.

Almost half of those whose views are embodied in the above statement believe that the service to and integration with the state and local adult education organizations will strengthen both them and the AEA.

Some of those in the two groups noted above, which together comprise almost half the interviewees, qualified their opinions as to the AEA's future by assuming it would "eliminate the doubt and vacillating caused by constant direction finding."

As one put it:

> If it continues to do what it's been doing--trying to decide what to do--it won't do anything.

Here again the problem of the vagueness and lack of clarity in the AEA's objectives and operations emerges. It has been noted in other connections in this report. In one sense it is repetitious to raise the issue again. To the authors, however, it is significant that the interviewees themselves, all of them persons in positions of leadership in adult education, mentioned this problem at every point possible. There is a yearning for concrete, definite program and action by the AEA on the part of a majority of the interviewees and comments on the questionnaires, together with the fact that over half the respondents had "mixed feelings, both pro and con," with respect to the program and activities of the AEA, indicates that this attitude is quite general. The concern at this point, coupled with the conservatism in forecasting the future and the high agreement on the most important tasks, seems a favorable omen. Despite all the setbacks the AEA has suffered, there is sufficient common ground on which to build.

Moreover, the pessimism noted at the opening of this section, however, is clearly not shared by the great majority. Indeed, as many persons as doubted the AEA's survival stated that if perchance the AEA as now constituted should fail to survive, another generalized national agency would have to be created. It is significant also that half the directors of the agricultural and home economics extension in the state colleges of agriculture stated that a general, national adult education organization was desirable and an additional one-fourth believed it to be essential, the rest deemed it unnecessary. The large favorable majority is interesting because one in four of this group who were or had been members were highly critical of the AEA.

In Conclusion: Thus far this report has dealt with adult education, the adult educator and the AEA, in terms of its history, the characteristics of its members and former members and their relations to the association.

A second part has paid considerable attention to some continuing problems which have plagued the association over the years. Having in this chapter attempted to explore the purposes of a national adult education agency as seen by its members and by members classified in a number of different ways, the discussion turns now in its final chapter to the alternatives before the AEA and to the conclusions which seem to the authors to emerge from the data presented.

Chapter XIV

ALTERNATIVES FOR THE AEA

This study of the role of a national organization in adult education, and specifically of the Adult Education Association of the U. S. A., must now return to the series of questions posed in the introduction. First, however, it may be useful to recall very briefly a few of the findings that have emerged.

A Few Findings. Adult education covers a vast range of activities serviced by an army of persons, most of whom give only a fraction of their time, and conducted by scores of organizations, both voluntary and tax-supported. Within the voluntary group are many whose primary objective is not adult education but which use educational procedures to further other purposes in such fields, among others, as health, religion and commerce. Among the latter adult education is frequently, though not always, more formalized and, especially in public schools, is apt to occupy a somewhat marginal position.

One result of this wide variety of auspices and offerings is that adult educators are not agreed as to just what adult education is. A definition apparently commanding the agreement of a good majority is just in process of emerging.

Adult educators themselves have frequently entered the field from some other. They are enthusiastic about what it can do and optimistic over its future. The membership of the AEA itself is made up of all types of persons interested in adult education, from volunteers to persons devoting full time to the administration of extensive programs. It is an extremely well-educated group, well over 90 per cent being college graduates, and over half of these holding graduate degrees. These are assets.

On the other hand, the adult educators who are members of the AEA are not greatly interested in it as an organization. They are typically people who receive a magazine, who have never attended an annual conference, and who seldom think of themselves as adult educators. The satisfactions they get from membership in the AEA they usually define in terms of practical assistance received or keeping up with a field. In these terms this membership has rather mixed feelings with respect to the AEA, and a minimum are definitely dissatisfied. There is, however, a more interested minority who read both publications, attend annual meetings occasionally or regularly, who receive broader satisfactions from their AEA membership and who are committed to supporting the development of adult education as a movement and a profession. Some leakage from the membership comes because of the dissatisfaction noted, the low level of loyalty to the AEA as an organization, and some because for many the AEA is a secondary connection, the primary one being such agencies as the National University Extension Association, the American Library Association, etc., though this type of competition is not as serious as some imagine. Finally, there is some loss because members have left the field of adult education. This membership loss has been severe and appears to be continuing, though at a greatly reduced rate. The marginal status of adult education and attendant insecurities are one possible explanation for this loss from the field.

What this means, of course, is that the AEA, like most voluntary organizations, has only a very small hard core of dedicated members who would be willing to give it a considerable amount of help. Appeals for every member to get a new member are unlikely to produce a response from the vast majority.

The AEA has some serious unsolved problems which have contributed to its present difficulties. It has not fully succeeded in achieving as democratic procedures for governing the organization as the Founding Assembly hoped for. To put it mildly, its loose form of organization has resulted in lack of coordination among its parts and in some struggles among groups and cliques for control. The AEA has been unable to decide whether it was to appeal to volunteer workers or professionals, and if both, how, if at all, its service should be differentiated. Despite almost continuous efforts at so-called "direction finding," it has not succeeded in settling this or several other issues. Finally, its life as an organization has been complicated by sudden riches through unexpected foundation support and sudden poverty through its unexpected withdrawal.

Voluntary Organizations Defined. The AEA is a voluntary association. Such organizations in our society may be defined as groups of individuals and/or organizations united for specific purposes and held together by recognized procedures and behaviors. The two most persistent and pervasive problems of voluntary associations are:

1. Maintaining membership interest and hence support.
2. Preserving the organizational goals.[1]

These broad purposes the AEA pursues, as does any such body, through a variety of activities and in an environment in which a number of specialized adult education agencies already exist. Unlike certain other embryonic or newer disciplines, the first organization in the field was not a general one from which the specialized groups sprang; in adult education the general association is the youngest of the group, a fact not without significance.

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[1] For a fuller discussion of these points cf. Sills, The Volunteers, pp. 18-77.

The Role of a Generalized Organization. This fact has led to the idea that the AEA could be an "umbrella" organization under whose aegis the various specialized agencies could associate and work together. But as one cynic remarked, "the umbrella has no handle." Moreover, a national organization should offer more than the place where adult educators can huddle together in a storm. An umbrella is a neutral or negative symbol. The national organization of a relatively new and burgeoning movement needs a more dynamic and imaginative symbol, and perhaps its choice is a clue to some of the difficulties of the AEA. If by this figure of speech it is meant that the AEA should promote the general welfare of adult education, it must be pointed out that this is a nonoperational goal unless and until this broad objective is broken down into a number of specific subgoals calling for concrete and describable actions, otherwise there are no unifying elements. Further, there is evidence from psychological studies that ill-defined goals not only result in vague and variable individual judgements but permit prestige or other effective groups to exert overly strong influences on organizational development.[2] A few possible concrete activities will be suggested later, but the point may be illustrated by the possible desirability of clearing American dealings with UNESCO over the forthcoming world adult education conference through a single source. But obviously a general organization must have specific and agreed upon functions if it is to serve in such a capacity.

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[2] M. Sherif, The Psychology of Social Norms, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936; and F. E. Emery and O. A. Oeser, Information, Decision and Action, Melbourne: University of Melbourne Press, 1958, Part V, 2.

In this particular, adult education seems to the present authors to have suffered from an abundance of eloquent statements and a paucity of practical policies. To pick a single and purposely unidentified illustration, when it is proclaimed by a very important adult education leader that "appropriate programming for adults requires retreading people in academic life," certain questions are bound to arise, such as:

If the programming has been so inadequate in the past, why are so many millions of persons annually availing themselves of adult education offerings?

What, operationally speaking, is meant by "retreading"?

How can a generalized agency, whether the AEA, the American Council of Education or what, accomplish the "retreading" or retraining of the thousands of persons in universities, colleges or schools who share in the adult education enterprise?

Until questions like these are answered with some degree of definitiveness, too much blame must not attach to administrators who receive with cynicism and sometimes anger suggestions that their staffs need "retreading." Such loose talk has lost some members in the past.

The Process of Participation. Probably no social scientists have summarized more succinctly and clearly the processes involved in the survival and success of an organization than March and Simon in the following statement:[3]

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[3] James March and Herbert Simon, Organization, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1954.

> 1. An organization is a system of interrelated social behaviors of a number of persons whom we shall call the participants in the organization.
>
> 2. Each participant and each group of participants receives from the organization inducements in return for which he makes to the organization contributions.
>
> 3. Each participant will continue his participation in an organization only so long as the inducements offered him are as great or greater (measured in terms of his values and in terms of the alternatives open to him) than the contributions he is asked to make.
>
> 4. The contributions provided by the various groups of participants are the source from which the organization manufactures the inducements offered to participants.
>
> 5. Hence an organization is "solvent"--and will continue in existence--only so long as the contributions are sufficient to provide inducements in large enough measure to draw forth these contributions.

Any suggestions as to future program activities of the AEA could well be scrutinized to determine how well they will facilitate the processes implicit in this quotation.

Questions of Program

The first question put to this study by the AEA was: What should be the principal objectives and program of a national organization concerned with adult education in relation to the basic problems, needs and trends in adult education in the United States?

A previous direction finding effort posed two related questions, included here since comments by some interviewees indicate that the issues stated are still of concern to some.

1. Should the program be as integrated and service directed as possible, or should major attention be given to developing special projects, the results of which might be generalized for all adult education?

2. Is the primary objective and obligation of the AEA service to its members, or should it serve as the spearhead of a social movement or, alternately, for community development?

The contrasting objectives these questions pose have been real dilemmas for the AEA at times in its past, and the failure to resolve them has hurt the organization. It is axiomatic in adult education that participants should determine program. In most institutions classes that do not attract a minimum enrollment are dropped. Others are added if requested. All attendance is voluntary. The same principle can be applied to an adult education organization. Whatever may have been the situation in the past, at the time of this study barely one AEA member in ten placed the spearheading of either a social movement or community development among the three most important activities for the AEA. In fact, in the judgement of the membership these two activities rated below most others. Moreover, the leaders, as represented by the interviewees, were not agreed as to what social movement means, as Chapter X shows. This may be a disappointment to those who place a high priority on either of these movements. Such individuals are quite free to form another organization to promote their ideas, or to try to change the opinion of their fellow members, but not to force activities they deem desirable upon an association, the great majority of whose members desire practical and specific service.

As to the other subsidiary question, the issue seems a false one. There is nothing to prevent any "service directed" agency from seeking outside support for and, if successful in obtaining it, conducting experiments, research or demonstrations which, when completed and analyzed, will contribute to still more effective service to the members and to adult education. The paramount question, therefore, is: What sort of service do the members of the AEA wish their organization to perform for them? As to this question the members, fortunately, have spoken very clearly.

Members Want Research. In terms of the total sample, more members rate as "very important" the conduct and promotion of research related to adult education and adult leadership than they do any other activity--81 per cent. Almost as many, 79 per cent, placed the dissemination "of practical techniques of adult education and adult leadership" in the same category. No other activity enlisted as much support. Indeed, the third highest, "develop a social philosophy of adult education," was 17 percentage points below the second. When asked to select the three most important out of eleven activities listed, all of which had received some attention from the AEA in the past, research and dissemination were even more clearly in the lead. When the desires of members were studied in terms of their adult education duties, their agencies, geographic location, age and education, the results were the same, with two or three minor exceptions. Moreover, the activity ranking in fourth place among those considered most important was closely related to dissemination, namely, "serve as a clearing house for programs, activities and methods for other organizations in adult education." Research and dissemination are also most often mentioned by the questionnaire respondents as needing greater emphasis on the part of the AEA.

With respect to research, it should be pointed out that the AEA published, after this present study was almost completed, an inventory of research in adult education done by the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University, and financed by the Fund for Adult Education.[4] This inventory makes quite clear the gaps in our knowledge in every phase of adult education and gives many suggestions for needed research projects. If the AEA could sponsor a small conference to evaluate these suggestions, determine priorities and then attempt to secure support for those projects deemed most important, in cooperation with university departments of adult education, results of great value should accrue, comparable perhaps to those of the early studies of adult learning.

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[4] Brunner et al., op. cit.

If this appears to be an extravagant claim, the authors would make the following points:

1. That a number of interviewees and some questionnaire respondents spoke of the "desperate need" for more assured knowledge and complained that they were "working in the dark."

2. That a considerable number of experiments and operational projects attempted in the last decade or so have been based on "hunches" or the ideas of a small group, without benefit of prior research and with a resultant fairly high proportion of failures or partial successes and an attendant ineffective, even wasteful, expenditure of funds.

3. That too little effort has been put into an analysis of either the successes or failures of many of these projects with a view to reaching generalizations for adult education.[5] Some excellent descriptions have appeared but, for instance, several interviewees complained that little was known of the significance for adult education of the test cities project of the Fund for Adult Education in terms of what was successful for what kinds of people, to mention but one item.

Viewing the whole situation in the light of comments made and the results of the inventory mentioned above, it appears that the development of adult education since the end of World War II has been too much influenced by enthusiasms and slogans and not enough by fundamental research making basic contributions to knowledge.

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[5] A happy exception is the forthcoming study of the extensive discussion group program in the Los Angeles area being prepared by Dr. Abbott Kaplan. Particularly significant in this project, supported by the Fund for Adult Education, is the fact that the research aspects were planned along with the experiment, facilitating the recording of important happenings as they occurred. It would be highly advantageous in this stage of the development of adult education if research processes could similarly be built into all experimental programs.

The unanimity of the demand for more research cannot be passed by without two further comments. Adult education is composed of many different facets. If those clamoring for research want service or action studies dealing with their own specific fields, there may be a battle of priorities which in the present situation would be most unfortunate. If, however, the desire is for fundamental studies, the authors or the AEA itself must needs see to it that operational implications are made crystal clear.[6] As to service studies, these might be arranged by the AEA or directly, by the use of students working under the university professors of adult education.

In the second place, the AEA should not rule out the possibility that some of those demanding research are responding to the general enthusiasm for research now evident in American society and attested by the great increase in the research expenditures of industry. In other words, the demand may be for research for its own sake, as a defense mechanism. While most of those interviewees who asked for research had rather definite ideas as to what was needed, there was enough vagueness among some to suggest that for them and an undeterminable number of respondents to the questionnaire the call for research was used to excuse their insecurity with respect to the field or their marginal status. An adequate research program can help remedy such a situation at least in the long run, especially if it is recognized.

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[6] The authors cannot resist at this point calling attention to a recent Australian study, Information, Decision and Action, by F. E. Emery and O. A. Oeser of the University of Melbourne (Melbourne, 1958). In terms of both theory and methodology it is one of the most spohisticated and definitive studies to appear anywhere in the field of adult education, but every major section makes clear-cut application of both theory and findings to the agricultural extension service, which apparently sponsored the inquiry.

Dissemination Desired. The desire for help with practical techniques of adult education, especially when combined with the relatively high priority given clearing house functions, is all but overwhelming. This is clearly a very important inducement that could be offered adult educators, "measured in terms of his values," which would elicit the "contributions" necessary to organize and maintain such a service. Moreover, it is something that could be initiated much more quickly than a research program of even modest proportions.

Adequate dissemination would of course need organization, the securing of reporters in each state or local association or council or major adult education agency, a periodic reminder to them to submit news with some guidance as to areas of interest to stress. This might be stimulated by offering prizes for the most significant and useful experiments judged from the point of view of what they could contribute to adult education in general. Adult Leadership could publicize such a plan. The awards could be made by a small committee or by a vote of the members on a ballot printed in Adult Leadership.

Especially significant experiments could perhaps be referred to university departments of adult education in the hope that they might be studied intensively by students and written up as term papers or even as thesis projects. The best of such might be published in a pamphlet series or carried as articles.

Dissemination need not be limited to success stories. It is perhaps even more important to recognize mistakes and analyze failures. The results of research studies, stressing the practical applications of the findings, would be of value to adult educators and would satisfy some of the demand for research findings.

The AEA meets this need in part by publishing annually a listing of adult education research with brief annotations in Adult Education. The editor of this review admittedly employs an exceedingly liberal definition of what constitutes research.[7]

Some of the best of such studies could well be summarized in effective articles in one or another of the AEA's publications. In connection with the inventory mentioned above, several were discovered which not only would merit such treatment but from which the field would have profited if so treated. The editor of the annual listing of research and the university professors of adult education could well be deputized to bring superior studies to the attention of the AEA's publication committee.

Interestingly, the older members of the AEA and past and present members of the Executive Committee, while rating research and dissemination of techniques quite high, are less interested in them than are other groups within the membership. This may be because they are more experienced than the rank and file, but this and one or two other comparably sharp differences raise the question as to whether unwittingly

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[7] Curiously, one of the most prolific sources of sound adult educational research has been almost completely ignored by Adult Leadership and largely by Adult Education, namely, studies in rural adult education under the auspices of the Division of Field Studies of the U. S. Department of Agriculture Extension Service and the cooperating state colleges of agriculture. The most recent Review of Extension Research: January through December 1958 (Washington: U. S. Department of Agriculture Extension Service Circular 521, July 1959) lists 75 amply annotated references dealing with supervision, in-service training, role expectations, community organizations, community clubs, volunteer leaders, program planning, evaluation, teaching techniques and methods, and mass communication. Less than one-third of the studies were concerned with vocational adult education. Nor is this the only field neglected. Research in attitude change, industrial training, and linguistics are illy reported, though more difficult to follow.

AEA policy has been directed more to meet the definition of needs as seen by those on the Executive Committee than by the members.

Priority for Philosophy. These two groups place a higher priority on the development of a social philosophy of adult education than do others, though among the questionnaire respondents it is in third place among the choices of the three most important activities for a national organization in adult education. Moreover, it rates second among those in which the AEA is deemed "most successful" by its members, though only 20 per cent so voted.

The AEA had for a number of years a committee on social philosophy which, after much interviewing, conference, correspondence and some questionnaire inquiries, produced a document that in oversimplified fashion may be described as an effort to be all things to all men. Since 39 per cent of the members replying to the present inquiry placed the development of such a philosophy among the three most important activities, they presumably are not satisfied with the statement, at least as of the present time--assuming they have read it, which newer members may not have done.

The literature dealing with this topic uses the terms social philosophy and philosophy, and defines neither. So far as the statements are efforts to phrase the motivating ideals, broad goals and objectives which should govern adult education in the second half of the twentieth century, there can be no criticism of attempting such a task. Whether such an effort, when completed, is philosophy may be left to philosophers to decide. If it raises the morale and enlarges the vision of adult educators it is useful. The philosophy of adult education can be deduced from what adult educators do rather than from what they say. This has been shown quite conclusively in a number of fields.[8] In the present situation of the AEA further attention to this area, especially if budgetary items are involved, should probably be held in abeyance until the activities given so much higher priority by members are better conducted.

It should perhaps be repeated that combining the clearing house function, placed by 30 per cent of the respondents among the top three desirable activities, with dissemination means that no one of the seven other activities listed was placed among the top three by as many as one-fourth of the respondents, and four of these seven were chosen by only about half as many or less.

It would be easy at this point to discuss at length the problems and needs of adult education in the United States in the 1960's and spin out a program related to each. It would also be futile. The AEA is currently in no position to do more than tackle the highest priority needs of the field, and the respondents and interviewees agree on what these are. Other desirable actions for the AEA will be noted later, but in terms of the questions which introduced this section one more topic may be discussed.

Promote Professionalization. Fifth priority for a national adult education association as seen by the sample of members is to advance adult education as a profession. Twenty-two per cent listed this among the three most important possible activities, as did about the same proportion of interviewees. About one-third of the interviewees held that "a top objective should be to increase the visibility of adult education in our society and promote a 'climate' favorable to it." This can be related to the proposal to advance adult education as a profession. As Chapter XI points out in its discussion of this question, the establishment of professional status is one way, though only one, for an occupation to acquire prestige in the society. With the establishment of university chairs and the increasing proportion of members in the "professional" category, adult education has probably embarked on the long journey leading to acceptance among the professions. If the two top priorities for the AEA, discussed earlier in this chapter, are successfully implemented, it will contribute to this end by helping to build the body of knowledge and experience which is the sine qua non of any profession. The "visibility of adult education in our society" can be increased by propaganda and other means, but high status must be earned, not proclaimed. Before this can be done, it is essential that those who desire a given status believe that they deserve it and display enough self-confidence to demonstrate their right. In the opinion of one distinguished adult educator, for all its direction finding the AEA has never "really studied how it could systematically improve its position." Instead, responsible leaders have acted "like representatives of a depressed class." A steadfast insistence by the AEA on evidences of sound developments in the field and interpretation of them when, as and if they occur, is much in order. Nor in a field as multi-faceted as adult education is this a task that can be performed solely by an executive secretary. At the least it is a job for the members of the Executive Committee and the professors of adult education, who have a large stake in "increasing visibility" for adult education.

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[8] Cf. for instance in education, George S. Counts, The American Road to Culture, New York: John Day Co., 1930; in religion, Wilbur C. Hallenbeck, The Urban Organization of Protestantism, New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1934.

Organization and Administration

The second major question in the charter of this study asked: What organizational and administrative pattern or patterns appear desirable to achieve the objectives and purposes (i.e., those emerging from the answers to question 1)? This question must be considered for the national organization both internally and in its relations with other agencies having varying degrees of interest in adult education.

Membership. Questions of organization begin with membership categories. At one time the AEA optimistically aspired to 50,000 members and hoped to enlist a large proportion of volunteer workers. This goal is only a few thousand below the actual membership of the most successful of secondary organizations, namely, the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Recently AEA membership recruitment has majored on persons professionally employed in the field; close to one-fifth of the interviewees would prefer an association made up only of such persons, students majoring in adult education, and organizations. Three-fifths of the interviewees, however, would vote for a professional membership, broadly defined, plus "committed" volunteer workers. Several interviewees suggested a membership basis similar to that of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science has two classes of individual members who pay the same dues, $8.50, and receive the periodical Science. The first class are Fellows, a status available to those actively engaged in advancing science. The general requirement is that the Fellow be doing work beyond the doctorate. The other class includes anyone interested enough in the purposes of the body to pay the annual dues. Only Fellows can hold office in the association. It might be difficult to institute such a plan in the AEA in view of some of the feelings expressed by older members who do not hold graduate degrees in adult education.

Organizations are also members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, as affiliates. Interestingly enough, membership recruitment is conducted through the affiliated organizations.

The National Conference on Social Welfare, another type of secondary association, also combines individual and organizational memberships, the latter at all levels. About 6,000 persons and 1,200 organizations belong, and over half the annual budget of $157,000 comes from dues, an illustration of what uniting the various interests in a field can do. It is apparent that some of the influence and strength of these bodies stems from a degree of cooperation which does not seem to have developed as yet in adult education.

The authors have no suggestions to make with respect to membership categories for the AEA beyond those now used. They believe the trend toward declining proportion of lay members is likely to continue, but they also believe that the AEA has much to offer leaders in many voluntary organizations. Members in such bodies who returned the questionnaire endorsed the two priorities for desirable activities already mentioned.

The AEA membership turnover is very high, apparently three times as high as in the Canadian Association for Adult Education. This indicates the need for a continuous membership campaign in cooperation with state and local associations and, hopefully, many members.

Specifically, the AEA might consider the areas where it has lost most heavily over the years, such as religion. Conversely, it might cultivate fields where the realization that programs are essentially adult education is growing. One example of this is the agricultural and home economics extension service of our state colleges of agriculture. Its leaders have been increasingly emphasizing that it is an adult education enterprise, and a majority of the state directors of extension indicated a favorable attitude toward the AEA and toward having at least the administrative, supervisory and specialist personnel join it. It is suggested that, once having rethought and determined upon its program, the AEA confer with representatives of these two and comparable fields to plan how to bring the advantages of membership to the attention of religious and extension service personnel. Each field, of course, will respond to recruitment only if the AEA can demonstrate its value in terms of the needs of each specific field for a generalized organization.

Administrative Patterns. Chapter VIII of this report discusses in some detail the administrative pattern of the AEA and the problems of achieving democracy within the organization. The Founding Assembly made elaborate provisions for choosing the Delegate Assembly, which is the governing body, and for the Executive Committee. In the opinion of the interviewees these have not been wholly successful. Some charged that the AEA was undemocratic, and a fifth would abolish the Delegate Assembly entirely, transferring its functions to the Executive Committee and an open meeting at the time of the annual conference. Many who would not go as far as this were quite dissatisfied with the workings of the Delegate Assembly. The difficulty of finding persons to serve the two-year term, which ideally involves attendance at the annual conferences, the fact that many delegates have to be appointed and are not responsible to a constituency, the difficulty of maintaining adequate communication through the year with members of the Delegate Assembly, and the unsolved problem of how and when to schedule meetings, have all contributed to the discontent with the present pattern. The problem of a recognized constituency for Delegate Assembly members cannot be satisfactorily solved until the AEA's relations with regions, states and metropolitan areas have been determined, an element in the situation considered elsewhere in this chapter. In considering this problem and the suggestions given later, the lack of knowledge many members have about the Delegate Assembly should be recalled.

Before considering possible solutions to this problem, it may be of interest to note the procedures governing the functioning of the two generalized and secondary organizations already mentioned. The legislative body of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, called the Council, is made up of representatives of the affiliated organizations. This Council elects the officers and the Board of Directors, and conducts all the association's business. Fellows and other members have no vote. It is stated that the few attempts to give them votes have not attracted support, because the association "stands for the advancement of science, not of scientists."

The main governing body of the National Conference on Social Welfare is the Executive Committee, which consists of 21 elected members plus the officers. They are elected for three-year terms, and all except the officers are elected on a competitive ballot. (About 35 per cent of the members return the ballots, about the same rate as the AEA's.) Nine of the Executive Committee members are regionally elected, and the rest are elected at large.

There is no body comparable to the Delegate Assembly of the AEA, and members have the power only to make suggestions to the Executive Committee. Almost all power is vested in the Executive Committee.

In addition to the Executive Committee, five other committees contain persons directly elected by a mail vote of the members: nominations, program, and a committee for each of the three major sections of the conference.

It will be seen that neither of these organizations is as "democratic" as the AEA. On the other hand, the procedures seem to be more successful in producing an effective governmental pattern. Certainly in neither case is there any doubt as to where responsibility lies.

Out of the many changes proposed by interviewees and others for making the Delegate Assembly of the AEA a more efficient body, most of which involve giving the Executive Committee greater responsibility, one well worth considering is, as noted in Chapter IX, to reduce the size of the Delegate Assembly to a maximum of perhaps 100 members, retaining the following functions:

Nomination of the Executive Committee members and officers

Fixing the membership dues

Approving changes in the constitution

Setting general policy with regard to the annual conferences and the expenditure of the association's funds

Making suggestions regarding the publications and policies of the AEA.

Efforts might also be made to improve communications with and briefing of members, and to give adequate time during the annual conference, at convenient hours, for a consideration of the business in hand.

This proposal would endow the Executive Committee with considerably more power and responsibility than it has had in the past, and would require changes in the constitution. There is, however, a clear desire that it exert more leadership. The present difficulties of the AEA require decision by a body meeting more than annually--one whose members are in close touch with association affairs. Among such decisions are those with respect to program and goals. Until these are made and implemented, recruitment of new members will be difficult.

Finance. A considerable majority of the interviewees are in favor of financing the basic programs of the AEA entirely through the dues of members, plus presumably such revenue sources as the sale of publications and the rental of exhibit space at annual conferences. This would protect the basic program from the results of variations in foundation support.

Such a policy does not, in the opinion of most of these persons, preclude the AEA from soliciting funds for special projects such as research, demonstration or experimentation, and this is definitely proposed by quite a number. Both these policies have much to commend them. Three other suggestions may be made.

1. The AEA should be recompensed for its costs in handling special funds and grants where such grants do not in themselves cover the cost of rent, equipment and services.

2. The AEA should seriously consider an increase in dues. It has one of the lowest rates of any comparable national organization. In view of its present problems an increase to an amount of between $7.00 and $8.50 would undoubtedly result in a further decrease in members. It is not possible to estimate the extent of such a loss, but it is a mere

matter of arithmetic to indicate that even if 1600 members failed to renew at a rate of $7.50 and all others did, the AEA would be no worse off and would have slightly lower costs for mailings and printing. Professional memberships should be raised to $12.50 or $15.00. Most comparable national organizations have higher dues than the AEA; some, as with the American Sociological Society, as high as $20.00 for Fellows. Very few organizations have a lower rate than that proposed here, and these publish far less.

If an increase of dues is decided upon, it might be announced well in advance with opportunity for immediate renewal and at the same time with the announcement of a new and more concentrated program of service. Advance payments of memberships might give some working capital and would hold some members who might otherwise be lost, until they had had an opportunity to appraise the value of the AEA program under the new administration.

3. It is suggested that the AEA adopt the practice of a number of non-profit, service organizations by including a line for contributions on the membership renewal forms, with or without an attached slip indicating why a contribution is desirable or stating a specific purpose to which extra contributions would be applied.

Annual Conference. Some interviewees argued that it was impossible to conduct an annual conference which could consider a topic and also give adequate consideration to the necessary business of the association. Their statement that no organization has done this successfully shows limited knowledge, but it is correct that the AEA has not. The program for the 1959 meeting appears to meet some of the objections raised to past procedures.

The AEA has had various policies with respect to having special interests represented by sections at annual conferences. Some hold that such sections prevent the discussion of an all-encompassing theme and make for separation within the organization. On the other hand, a 1956 committee listed fifteen "needs" of public school adult educators peculiar to that field.

Judged by the experience of other organizations, the problem is not insoluble. The American Association for the Advancement of Science has a large number of sections. The National Conference on Social Welfare selects an overall theme which is emphasized on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of the conference week. Section meetings and "common service" meetings dealing with such topics as public relations, research, or financing are held on Tuesday and Thursday. The average attendant spends three days at the forum and hence gets a taste of both general and specialized discussions. All told, about three hundred meetings are held during the week. The American Sociological Society also has an overall theme, accommodates thirty topical sections and conducts the necessary business of the organization.

While probably no present or future section can help the former member who complained because he got no help in teaching elementary algebra to adults, the device of using sections has two values:

1. In a field as amorphous as adult education and with as many facets, where there are enough members to support a section, this would - or should - provide something of value to representatives of each special interest. As to program, any groups meeting the criteria for sections could be given autonomy.

2. By the device of a common theme it can bring representatives of many special fields together to consider the problems common to all areas

of adult education and/or to all adult educators.

Careful study and development of sections at annual conferences seem warranted to determine whether greater use of this device should be made than at present.

Sections and the Future. In the near future the development of effective sections along content rather than organizational lines might offer the possibility for the AEA to come to hold a position in adult education similar to that of the National Conference on Social Work in the welfare field, or even of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The bare beginnings of some such process may perhaps already be appearing, as witness the literacy section which even has its own funds. If this represents a desirable development, it would be wise to begin to plan how sections can be nurtured, given sufficient autonomy, and retain strong ties with the "mother" organization. This is not a task of highest priority, but neglect of the question for too long might well eventuate in another bit of administrative confusion. Careful planning for the type of development suggested might well result in an important new area of service and opportunity for the AEA.

Make the AEA an Annual Meeting Topic. It is also suggested that at each annual meeting an hour be set aside for an interesting, interpretive report of the AEA's life and work during the preceding year, of a type which an attendant could use in reporting to a local organization at home. Half the time should be allowed for questions. A possible pattern for such an hour would be the new type of stockholders' meetings pioneered by some large corporations and attended by thousands of people. Such a scheme might help reduce some of the lack of information about the AEA which the questionnaires disclosed. It could also be used to build pride in and loyalty to the AEA, assuming that the year has been productive. Some members have felt that the AEA's own affairs at annual conferences were introduced almost with an apology, which is unlikely to impress members with the organization's importance.

Papers at Annual Conferences. A final suggestion with respect to the Annual Conference of the AEA and related organizations is that the AEA issue an invitation in the early winter of each year for members to submit research papers which would be considered for inclusion in the program of the conference. The best of these could be selected for reading and discussion, probably in section meetings. Quite a number of organizations use this device, some giving preference to younger members. This plan would have several advantages. It would encourage research, and the members desire this. It would be a first step in dissemination of results. It would evidence the interest of the AEA in what its members were doing. It would involve more members in the program. It would increase to some degree a wider acquaintanceship within the association. The selection of only the best of the papers submitted for inclusion in the program might raise the standards of research. While some papers would relate to the conference theme, those not so related but of high merit might be presented at meetings of an appropriate section or a special section on research.

Organized Relations With Other Adult Education Agencies

The second part of the question concerned with administration raised the question of the role of a generalized national adult education organization in relation to other and more specialized agencies.

Direction-finding efforts of the AEA in the recent past have made two approaches to this problem. The 1957 Commission on Direction Finding asked:

What are the total adult education needs of the membership to be served?

Which are met by other agencies?

What remains to be done?

What of this remainder should the AEA provide?

This curiously negative formulation appears to reduce the AEA from the secondary organization it is for about half its membership to a residual role. Moreover, such questions cannot be answered until the AEA has settled the as yet unresolved issues with respect to its aims and objectives. The present authors would not accept such a residual role for the AEA as necessarily best either for the good of adult education or for its own sake as an organization.

Another direction finding effort two years earlier stated the issue in these terms: Should the AEA seek a position of leadership in the field or should its primary objective be to occupy a facilitating role, helping when opportunity offers?

The assumptions in this question seem unrealistic. A position of leadership in any field, no matter how sought, can be achieved only by earning it. Indeed, even a facilitating role is impossible unless the ability to "facilitate" or "help" is admitted by those to whom the service is offered. In other words, even this role must be earned.[9]

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[9] An outsider cannot help but be impressed with the frequency with which AEA direction finding efforts posed questions and issues in essentially unrealistic terms, in that the AEA had no power to adopt either of the proposed alternatives. At best it could have on numerous occasions selected several of a series of posed alternatives as objectives and then planned realistically how to achieve them.

The analogy of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the National Conference on Social Welfare, urged by several interviewees, breaks down at this point. The former organization is over one hundred years old. Many specialized science societies grew up within it. Thus it has many affiliated organizational members, including 44 state or local academies of science. The latter, under a number of names, dates from 1874. It has been called the "mother of national organizations." It has high prestige, and election to the presidency of the organization is the highest honor in the social welfare field. The AEA is hardly in a comparable position.

Possible Contributions of a National Adult Education Organization. Nonetheless, a vigorous generalized agency in the field of adult education could make a contribution. This contribution could begin with the two activities most desired by the AEA's own membership—the conduct or promotion of fundamental research and dissemination.

The reason for this is not far to seek. There has been very little research in the field of adult education, and most of what has been done falls into the category of service research. In preparation for an inventory of adult education research, an inquiry was addressed to agency members of the CNO, asking what research each had done or had under way.[10] The great majority had conducted none at all. Some agencies are spending large sums on activities without showing any curiosity as to the effectiveness of their methods or the results of their work.

Beyond the two activities already recommended, several other suggestions are in order. One has already been noted, the desirability of having an organization like the AEA serve as a clearing house and spokesman for American adult education interests at the international level. Involved here are arranging for American representatives at international conferences devoted to or paying some attention to adult education, planning visits of foreign adult educators so that maximum benefits may accrue to them and to host institutions, and receiving and sifting materials from overseas and interpreting the best of it for Americans. In time, especially if cooperation could be arranged with the Canadian Association for Adult Education, such service might warrant a full-time officer.

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[10] For a discussion of why this is so, *cf.* Brunner *et al.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-6.

The AEA could call a conference of the officers of specialized adult education agencies--such as the National University Extension Association, the Association of University Evening Colleges, the Agricultural and Home Economics Extension Services, and the American Library Association--to inquire how, if at all, it could serve their members, and what types of materials would make the publications of the AEA useful to them[11] and at what levels.[12] A conference of this type might put the missing "handle on the umbrella." For while the teacher of elementary algebra already alluded to may not believe it, there are many problems common to all areas of adult education. Professors of adult education who conduct graduate seminars that include representatives of a number of adult education fields in the group are often amused by the surprise some students show when they discover this.

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[11] It was reported that a conference on the latter topic with a few agencies was promised but never held.

[12] Some interviewees stated that the AEA should be an elite organization enlisting only deans and directors of extension, supervisors, and, in terms of agricultural and home economics extension, specialists.

An Employment Service. Certain services would also seem appropriate for a national generalized adult education agency. It could, for instance, develop a simple employment service by circulating quarterly mimeographed lists of positions open and of personnel available. Those seeking positions could be listed for a nominal charge of $1.00. Professional and contributing members could receive this material as a membership privilege, others for a small charge.

In a field both as varied and amorphous as adult education, such a service might help keep some persons in the field. Conversely, it might inform administrators of persons with experience in adult education when their own knowledge of available personnel might not be large.

Talent Inventory. Akin to this proposal is the suggestion that the AEA compile, in cooperation with other agencies and the professors of adult education, a classified "talent inventory" of persons with competence in specific fields of adult education who might be enlisted to help local or state adult education associations, councils or other agencies, especially those of a volunteer character.[13]

Relations with Local and State Associations. There are a number of state and local adult education associations or councils, but their life cycles indicate an above-average mortality. A number of these have joint membership arrangements with the AEA. This plan has been successful in many organizations but its success requires an immediate processing of memberships by the two organizations concerned. This has not always happened in the case of some states and perhaps not in the national office. It should also be noted that in a number of comparable organizations the local or state unit, as the collection agency, retains all sums paid but remits its due share to the national office. In some organizations, further, if gifts or memberships come directly to the national office,, an agreed-upon share is remitted to the appropriate state.

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[13] As an illustration consider the case of a very competent younger person in the field of community organization with special reference to adult education, who has gone to a post two thousand miles from where he was beginning to be well-known and with responsibilities of quite a different nature. His service to his new region would be enhanced if his interest and competence in the area named were known.

It is quite clear from both interviews and questionnaires that the AEA membership will not permit these state and local associations to become branches of the AEA controlled from its headquarters. Only about one-fifth of the interviewees and one-tenth of the respondents favored this. Just over half of those answering questions on AEA state and local relations preferred that the AEA be not only a resource agency but guide local organizations and lend support where able, and presumably if requested, to specially important programs. The others want assistance from the AEA when asked for by the local agency.

The proportions noted are less important than the fact that without exception the desirability of relations between the AEA and state and local associations was accepted and desired. In addition to other arguments in favor of such relationships, a good local or state association with an appreciable measure of interaction among its members and between it and the AEA, appears to build interest in the broader aspects of adult education and to sharpen the self-perceptions of the members as adult educators.

These broader interests and the greater degree of identification among members with the field of adult education should make it easier for the AEA to attract new members and hold older ones, and should also facilitate the use of joint membership plans. This is an added reason for AEA interest in and help to state and local bodies.

Field Service Desired. Adult education leaders want field service from the AEA. Only the need for research was mentioned as often by the interviewees. This is sound thinking. The only way for any organization to build "grass roots" support is to serve at the grass roots level.

Currently the AEA's staff is too limited to give much of this desired field service. It is therefore proposed that an unhurried conference be held with university professors of adult education to explore the possibility that they might accept responsibility for field service within a reasonable distance of their institutions, using their graduate students as staff. Such practical problems as emerged from the field through such service might be useful in seminar discussions. It is suggested that such service be given in the name of the AEA and the university cooperatively; and that while obviously any group or person could approach any university professor directly, the plan, if worked out, should be announced by the AEA and requests cleared through it. This field service might also help to increase the sense of identification on the part of the recipients with adult education and increase their willingness to consider themselves adult educators.

The proposed conference with university professors could well cover more topics than the single suggestion made here. Few groups have a greater stake in the AEA than professors of adult education. They are training personnel for the field the AEA is seeking to enlarge and develop. Serious consideration could well be given as to how this group's full-time service to adult education can be so focused as to be of greater benefit to the AEA.

Some Generalizations. In the light of the experience of the AEA and of certain other national organizations several generalizations can be made.

1. National, state and local bodies must not duplicate functions but must render distinctive services to and perform recognized functions for their members. Suggestions as to differentiation of programs were made in a previous chapter.

2. The national organization must permit its relations with state and local units to be flexible, fitting the local situation. For instance, there should not be an absolute requirement that there can be only one super-local association per state that would prevent, say, California or Texas from having two regional associations instead of one for the state. Variations from any generalized scheme should, however, be held to a minimum and reflect only demonstrated need.

3. The national organization cannot demand cooperation. If it asks for any special cooperative service it should meet the costs. "We just about ruined our council trying to do what Chicago asked," said one local president.

4. Until firmly established, state and local associations often need a concealed subsidy in the form of free office space and/or staff service from some agency or university. This may well make the difference, and in some cases has, between survival and later effective growth and the death of the organization. Promotion of state and local units should stress this point and help in securing such cooperation.

5. Field service must be done by highly competent people. This self-evident preachment is included since there was considerable criticism by interviewees of persons sent by the AEA in its lush days. It was charged that after announcing that what was done must meet local conditions, they showed themselves to be wed to a single idea and quite lost in facing local conditions where this idea was impractical or rejected.[14]

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[14] A conspicuous exception to this was the Mountain-Plains Regional Project, always mentioned with enthusiasm.

Priorities. Beyond the general indications already given and based on replies of interviewees and respondents to the questionnaire, the authors are not venturing to lay down priorities. It is impossible for them to say if something here called "field service" is or is not more important than building a profession. Indeed, the former might, as indicated, be one element in reaching the latter objective. Moreover, it is conceivable that some one activity would be more valuable for adult education than another but less valuable for the AEA as an organization. As a relatively new organization functioning in an area still illy defined, the AEA cannot concentrate, as does the National Conference on Social Welfare, largely on holding an annual conference. Nor can it major on building and promoting the welfare of a profession, so largely a concern of the National Education Association. It failed to be all things to all members in the days of its affluence. This is less possible now than then. It is incumbent on the leadership to set the objectives for the AEA to pursue within the range of the practical possibilities of staff and funds. This means that the AEA must learn to refuse to do good in order that it may do well those things which are possible. But the next steps beyond the immediately possible should be decided upon and mapped. As resources become available each new step should be taken. The development should be planned for and progress reported. This might well increase the interest of the members in and their loyalty to the AEA because it would supply the sense of direction so many testify the association has so long lacked.

Causes of Difficulties and Problems

The final question put by the AEA asked "to what extent" certain stated conditions have contributed to the difficulties of the AEA.

Extent is a word implying precise measurement, which is not possible in the terms in which the questions are phrased. Rather, extent in this connection appears to have been used in the loose, popular sense and in those terms these questions can be answered.

Organizational and Administrative Patterns. When one asks the extent to which the organizational patterns adopted by the AEA are responsible for its current problems, the answer can be given in one word, "considerable."

The idea of four separate offices endorsed by the Founding Assembly, with the coordinating office furthest west rather than more centrally located, was defensible only on the grounds of the poverty of the organization. To permit such an arrangement to continue when the large grants from the Fund for Adult Education were received was to invite divisiveness. The philosophy of extreme permissiveness which even led to an apology for having a constitution "because necessary for incorporation," opened the door for some of the struggles for power among cliques which most interviewees insist went on. When this permissiveness went to the extent of allowing separate appeals for funds by what were supposed to be "suborganizations" one wonders that the AEA survives. When at least some of these grants reportedly were, and to some extent still are, administered by the AEA without a fee to cover management, bookkeeping and accounting charges, the outsider may admire its generosity but not its wisdom.

For some reason or reasons there appears to have been a fear among those who brought the AEA into being of building an organization with a firm and operable structure. Considerations of sound organization have been consistently pushed into last place at annual conferences. Worse, they have all but been reported as something evil that had better be repressed.[15] This attitude has extended to field relations. In the much praised Mountain-Plains project there was much emphasis on building a program those locally concerned wanted; none on building ties with the AEA, which had secured the funds. Hence when these funds were withdrawn there was no effective organization to carry on even a modicum of further activity. It is to be hoped that the Delegate Assembly or the Executive Committee, if given power, will pay explicit attention to the AEA as an organization and never fail to consider what effect any decisions on program and service will have on the organization in the long run.

The final chapter of a report of this nature is not the place to insert a complete catalog of what, looking backward, students of organization who shared no responsibility for these decisions now find good cause to criticize. One perhaps too dour but lifelong friend of adult education remarked, "If the Executive Committee of the AEA and the Fund for Adult Education had set out to bring the AEA to its present pass, they couldn't have planned it much better." The authors do not wholly agree with but can understand this comment.

Failure to Pursue Attainable Purposes. An affirmative answer must also be given to the query as to whether "a possible failure to center on and persist with attainable objectives and purposes" helps explain the AEA's present problems. It appears to have attempted to do too much, to make some contribution to almost any need brought to its attention. One evidence of this is the number of committees appointed, especially after the

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[15] The authors cannot accept the oft repeated assertion that this situation is a reactive from the tight control exercised in the preceding American Association of Adult Education as the sole explanation.

Fund for Adult Education grants became available, which either failed to report or which met and presented a report or program never implemented in terms of staff assignments.

Other evidences, especially with respect to the AEA's vagueness and uncertainty, have been amply alluded to in previous chapters. They are one reason why in this report stress has been laid on a relatively few activities, meeting often-expressed needs. The AEA cannot now, if it ever could, afford to attempt to be all things to all adult educators.

Problems of a Generalized Organization. Another hypothesis presented by the AEA is that its difficulties may in part be chargeable to the normal problems of organizing a movement or an idea on a national basis. The authors prefer to state this in terms of the problems of organizing a generalized national agency which inevitably, for many people in the field, has to be a secondary organization because of the degree of specialization which has already come in adult education. This is not a peculiar problem. The American Country Life Association, launched hopefully in the early 1920's, dwindled to a few hundred members when foundation support was withdrawn. Meeting annually, it is kept alive largely by devoted officers serving without compensation; it issues its proceedings but is unable any longer to support its magazine. Even the National Conference on Social Welfare, despite its large budget, is meeting some of the same problems in its field as is the AEA, though with the great asset that it is older than the specialized agencies in social welfare and possesses a reservoir of great prestige, something the AEA has not yet earned.

The authors do not believe that the present stage of development of adult education in the United States or inadequate public understanding of it bears much, if any, blame for the dilemmas of the AEA as it faces the 1960's. There has been adult education in the United States for well over a century. It has had tax support in a few localities at least since the 1840's. Its participants are numbered in the millions but they think of themselves concretely as taking this course or that, joining an international affairs discussion group or a Great Books circle, not as participants in a "movement." The term "adult education" is coming into increasing use. The term would be still more common if adult educators were not uneasy about it or even about calling themselves what they are. Inadequate public understanding is probably not a serious handicap for the AEA, unless it should embark on a general money raising campaign. Even the term "continuing education," which some prefer, would not be an asset in a general campaign for funds.

Conclusion. There is no easy way out of the dilemmas the AEA faces. To some extent they are of its own creation and some of them will have to be lived with. It is to be hoped that the development of NAPSAE and state units affiliated with it will not isolate public school adult education from the main currents of a developing adult education in the United States. The fact that there are as many public school educators in the AEA membership who are not members of NAPSAE as there are who are would seem to offer some hope of a rapprochment. Certainly both public school and general adult education will suffer if there is not continuous interaction and cooperation, but the authors hazard no guess as to the extent to which this may be implemented.

Colleges and universities are more and more accepting responsibility for educational leadership in their areas. A number of voluntary organizations are developing sound educational programs, of which the Foreign Policy Association's experiments in rural Oregon in cooperation with the

Agricultural and Home Economics Extension Service and the Great Book program are two quite different illustrations. Some commercial organizations, too, have begun to use the vocabulary of adult education, though their approach often still seems tinctured with hidden persuasion. Particularly to such the CNO has a contribution to make in organizational terms, though the full contribution of adult education in terms of research findings, techniques and methods will doubtless require agency educational officers to be AEA members, as many are.

The very fact that adult education is as amorphous and as varied as it is in content, auspices, techniques and methods seems to the authors to call for a generalized national organization in the field, capitalizing on the large amount of cross-fertilization possible, serving all its facets in some such ways as have been indicated here and building upon such a foundation as expanding a service as may be called for. Most nations in the free world have such associations and find them essential.

At a group interview the authors held with nearly a score of deans and directors of university extension, there was general agreement and no dissent from the statement: "If unhappily the AEA should die we would have to organize another association to take its place." The authors can only add that in such a contingency, if this were not done, adult education as a whole would be the poorer. Far better if the AEA lives and flourishes!

APPENDIX A

Some Methodological and Technical Matters*

In hopes of improving the readability of the report, the many methodological and technical problems which arose in the course of the research have generally been bypassed in the main body of the presentation. However, a full understanding of the trustworthiness and representativeness of the questionnaire and interview replies which have served as the basis of many of the conclusions requires a full discussion of the methods of data collection used and their limitations. Therefore, this appendix will consider in some detail the processes of data collection which have been used.

The Questionnaire to AEA Members

The Use of Questionnaires. Very early in the design of this study it was decided that the major research instrument would be a questionnaire mailed to all members of the AEA. This decision had both its drawbacks and advantages. Any mailed questionnaire is almost certain to produce biased results because of the self-selecting nature of the sample. Consequently, it was realized from the beginning that by choosing to use this type of research instrument we were foregoing the hope of obtaining a completely representative picture of the members and their opinions. Various considerations, however, suggested that this loss of representativeness might not be too serious. If, as suspected, the more informed and involved members were more likely to respond to the questionnaire, then the biased sample of questionnaire respondents might be considered a more accurate reflection of those who will make decisions for the AEA than a completely representative sample of all members. Secondly, if a relatively high return rate could be obtained, there would be less chance of producing seriously a biased sample, and two considerations suggested that a reasonably high return rate could be expected. It was known that in general AEA members had completed many years of formal schooling, and previous studies had shown that the rate of questionnaire return tended to increase with education. Furthermore, two previous studies of AEA's membership had used mailed questionnaires with fairly good results in obtaining replies. Not only did this latter fact suggest that we could also anticipate a sizable return. In addition the use of a mailed questionnaire also offered the possibility of making comparisons with these earlier studies on certain items, since it would not be unreasonable to assume that biases which existed in any of the mailed questionnaires were likely to be present in the others.

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* This appendix was prepared by William L. Nicholls II.

Another major reason for the selection of a mailed questionnaire as the major research instrument, however, lay outside the area of research decisions. The AEA Executive Committee hoped to utilize the data collection process as an opportunity for all the members to think about some of the problems facing the AEA and adult education as a preparation for democratic decision making. Since it was impossible to interview every member, mailed questionnaires provided the only option which could simultaneously meet both the research demands and set the stage for the democratic decision making.

Questionnaire Construction and Pre-Test. An initial draft of a questionnaire applicable for both AEA members and adult educators who were not members was drawn up during the summer of 1958, and through the cooperation of Dr. Coolie Verner of Florida State University this form was pre-tested on 29 adult educators residing in or near Tallahassee, Florida. Copies of this same form were also examined by the Executive Director of the AEA, a Committee of Consultants appointed by the AEA's Executive Committee, Dr. J. R. Kidd of the Canadian Association for Adult Education, and various consultants at the Bureau of Applied Social Research. On the basis of the pre-test results and the excellent suggestions provided by the consultants, a final draft of a questionnaire for AEA members was prepared and separate questionnaires for former members and those adult educators who had never been AEA members were developed.

Mailing and Processing. The questionnaire was mailed to each paid-up individual member as of September 1958 who lived in the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii, or Puerto Rico.[1] Organizational members and those residing in foreign countries were excluded from the study. These 5656 questionnaires were mailed on October 16, 1958. One month later, when approximately 38% of the questionnaires had been returned, a systematic sample of all those who had not yet returned their questionnaire was drawn by taking every other name from the list of non-returnees.[2] This sample of 1626 non-returnees was mailed a second identical questionnaire with a strong request that they complete it as soon as possible. By the cut-off date of February 3, 1959, a total of 2899 questionnaires had been returned, or 51.3% of those mailed.

Not all of the returned questionnaires were processed for tabulation and analysis. Seven contained too little information to make processing worthwhile, and 14 questionnaires were rejected because it appeared that they had been filled out by someone other than the person to whom they were addressed. Of the remaining 2878 usable questionnaires, an even 2000 were selected for processing by systematic random sampling.[3] This final selection was necessary because limited time and money available precluded a processing of all those returned.

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[1] While conducting interviews with certain members it was discovered that some claimed never to have received a copy of the questionnaire. In almost all instances further investigation revealed some confusion about their membership position in the home office or a delayed payment of dues which resulted in a temporary removal from the membership roles at the time of the questionnaire mailing.

[2] Because of the time required for mail to travel outside the continental United States, non-returnees residing in Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico were not sampled for a second questionnaire.

Biases in the Membership Sample

As already indicated, the temptation to generalize from questionnaire respondents to all members must be resisted. It cannot be assumed that those who failed to reply would agree completely with those who did. Common sense suggests the more involved members would be more prone to cooperate. Fortunately, such problems need not be entirely matters of speculation, for it is possible to examine empirically the extent of at least some of the possible biases.

Variations in Return Rate. One approach to measuring the extent of bias resulting from incomplete returns is to examine variations in the rate of return among various groups of members. For example, the type of membership held in the AEA, given in Table 1, may be considered an indicator of involvement in the organization, and therefore differential return rates according to the type of membership may be taken as evidence as to the effects of involvement on return. It is clear that the general or five-dollar members were less likely to return their questionnaires than the professional or ten-dollar members. The highest return rate of all is found for the contributing members, whose dues are fifteen dollars a year. A bias in the same direction, but somewhat greater in magnitude, was also reported for the 1956 mailed-questionnaire survey conducted by the AEA.

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[3] One exception was made to strict systematic random sampling among the usable questionnaires for processing. For certain purposes it was important to obtain as complete information about the opinions of the past and present members of the Executive Committee as possible. Consequently 16 questionnaires returned by Executive Committee members were processed even though they were not drawn in the systematic sample.

Table 1: The Percentage of Questionnaires Returned in Two Surveys by Type of Membership

Type of membership	1958 survey	1956 survey
Contributing	61.7% (60)*	65.8% (1757)
Professional	56.5% (1469)	
General	48.5% (4113)	51.2% (11307)

A second measure of involvement in the AEA is attendance at the national conferences. As shown in Table 2, those who attended the 1958 conference had a considerably higher return rate than those who did not, and this does not appear to be the result solely of announcements made at the conference about the questionnaire. Even prior to the start of the conference those who were to attend had a higher rate of return than those who did not. This strengthens the belief that attending the convention is a useful indicator of involvement in the AEA and that it is involvement which influenced the return rate rather than exhortations to return the questionnaire given in announcements at the conference.

When the return rate is considered jointly by the type of membership

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[*] Numbers in parentheses indicate the total number of members with a particular type of membership and are the bases of the per cents.

Table 2: The Percentage of Questionnaires Returned by Attendance at the 1958 National Conference

Attendance at the conference	Returned before the conference	Total returned	Base of %'s
Attended	55.6%	75.9%	(324)
Did not attend	33.9%	49.4%	(5332)

and attendance at the 1958 conference, as in Table 3, it may be seen that conference attendance is more strongly related to the return rate than type of membership, although both indicators of involvement appear to show some relationship to return even when the other is held constant.

Table 3: The Percentage of Questionnaires Returned by Attendance at the 1958 National Conference and Type of Membership

Type of membership	Attended the conference	Did not attend the conference
Contributing	78.6% (14)*	56.5% (46)
Professional	77.0% (191)	53.4% (1278)
General	74.6% (118)	47.7% (3995)

Although Tables 1, 2 and 3 all indicate that there is some bias in the sample resulting from the higher return rates of those involved enough in AEA to take out one of the higher priced memberships or to attend the conference, the total result of this bias is not great. Only 5.7% of the members attended the 1958 national conference and only 1.1% held contributing memberships. Thus the two groups which show the most over-representation are rather small ones. When one considers the simple distinction between contributing and professional members on the one hand (27.0% of all members) and general members (73.0%) it may be seen in Table 1 that the differences in return rate are not great. Thus it would seem that there is evidence that the sample is biased by the inclusion of the more involved members, although not drastically so.

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* Numbers in parentheses are the bases of the per cents.

The return rates also have been examined on a state by state basis. It does not seem to be the case that those states in the AEA's Joint Membership Plan have higher return rates than others, but there are some regional differences. As shown in Table 4, those members residing in the western and north central states have a slightly higher return rate than those residing in either the northeastern or southern parts of the country. This holds true even when the type of membership is controlled.

Table 4: The Percentage of Questionnaires Returned by the Region in Which the Members Reside and Their Type of Membership

Region*	Professional or contributing members	General members	Total
Western	63.3%	51.2%	54.4% (981)
North Central	57.4%	50.7%	52.8% (1925)
Northeastern	54.8%	45.9%	48.6% (822)
Southern	53.2%	45.2%	47.7% (1859)

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Western = Wyo., Colo., Utah, N. M., Nev., Ariz., Wash., Ore., Idaho, Mont., and Calif.

North Central = Ohio, Ind., Wis., Mich., Ill., N. D., S. D., Minn., Iowa, Mo., Kan., and Neb.

Northeastern = Me., Vt., N. H., Conn., Mass., R. I., N. Y., N. J., Pa., Md., Del., D. C., and W. Va.

Southern = Va., Tenn., Ky., N. C., S. C., Ga., Ala., Miss., La., Fla., Tex., Okla., and Ark.

Comparisons of Waves. Another method of locating biases in the sample is to assume that those members who did not return a questionnaire until they were sent a second copy are more like the unanswering group than those who returned the first questionnaire. If this assumption is correct, then it may be possible to learn something about the non-answering group by noting the ways in which those responding only after receiving a second mailing differ from those who answered the first mailed questionnaire.

Because this method rests on some unproved assumptions, it is best to test it first on already known biases. For example, it was just shown that those attending the national conference in 1958 were more likely to return their questionnaires than those who did not. This same bias is also indicated by the second method, for it is found that 9% of those who returned their questionnaires before the second mailing (who for short will be called the first wave respondents) attended that conference as opposed to 5% of those not answering until they received a second copy of the questionnaire (who will be called the second wave respondents).[4] Similarly, it is found that 32% of the first wave respondents were professional or contributing members, as opposed to 23% of the second wave respondents, thus once again indicating a bias in the same direction as that determined by the return rate analysis.

In Table 5 several comparisons are made between the first wave respondents and the second wave respondents. In general the differences tend to be quite small, but a somewhat consistent pattern does emerge from the comparisons. The first wave respondents tend in general to be

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[4] All percentages comparing the first mailing and second wave respondents are taken only from the sample of tabulated questionnaires rather than the total of all questionnaires returned.

Table 5: Comparisons of First Wave and Second Wave Respondents

		First wave respondents	Second wave respondents	Differences in %
Ever an officer, delegate, or committee member	Yes	16%	10%	+6
	No	84	90	-4
Ever attend an annual conference	Yes	30%	26%	+4
	No	70	74	-4
When first joined AEA	1951-1952	31%	23%	+8
	1953-1956	55	58	-3
	1957-1958	14	19	-5
How interested in AEA as an organization	Very or moderately	67%	66%	+1
	Slightly or not at all	33	34	-1
Favorableness of image of AEA	Favorable	54%	59%	-5
	Neutral	29	30	-1
	Unfavorable	17	11	+6
Present position in adult education	Full-time	27%	22%	+5
	Some of full-time	45	52	-7
	Part-time	7	4	+3
	Volunteer	14	9	+5
	No position	7	13	-6
Mean Information Score		1.04	.80	+.24

more involved and informed than the second mailing returners; they are more likely to be or have been officers, delegates, or members of one of AEA's committees; they more frequently attended at least one annual conference; they more often joined AEA in its early years; and they have a higher mean information score than the second wave respondents.

It is somewhat surprising to learn that their expressed interest in AEA as an organization is no greater than the second wave respondents and that these first wave respondents contain a slightly larger proportion who have an unfavorable image of AEA. Although this last relationship is somewhat difficult to understand, it does at least suggest that the sample is not composed only of those members who are uncritical of the AEA. It also suggests that responding to the questionnaire is more a function of being involved enough and informed enough about the AEA to have opinions than it is to the content of the opinions.

In general, the comparisons of the first and second wave respondents appear to be most useful in supporting the previous conclusions of the return rate analysis that: 1) No biases of such great magnitude exist which would make the questionnaires useless for understanding the membership, and 2) the major biases which do exist appear to be mainly those resulting from a greater participation of the more interested and informed members. Since such individuals undoubtedly are more important than others in the actual operation and support of the AEA and are also likely to be disproportionately involved in its decision making, such biases do not seem particularly disturbing.

Sampling and Significance Tests. The reader may wonder whether the failure to tabulate all the questionnaires returned rather than a sample of 2000 may further reduce the representativeness of the sample appreciably. The answer to this question is that the sampling can have only a minor and measurable effect. When percentages in the sample are based on the full 2000 tabulated cases, the variation in a percentage will almost never be more than 3 percentage points from what would have been found if all 2899 cases had been tabulated.[5]

This raises a related question. The reader may wonder why tests of statistical significance have not been used in this report. The answer to this is twofold. First it should be noted that in general, tests of statistical significance are inapplicable to mailed questionnaires because the sample is self-selected rather than selected at random. Consequently, even if all the returned questionnaires had been tabulated, tests of significance would not be appropriate. Secondly, although tests of significance could have been made to see whether differences in percentages could have arisen from the random selection of the tabulated questionnaires from the total returned questionnaires, this seemed a waste of time. What one wants to know is whether the tabulated sample differs markedly from the universe of all members, and this cannot be determined by any test of significance.

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[5] At least the variation will not be greater than 3% one time out of a hundred and will not be greater than 4% more than one time out of a thousand.

The Questionnaire to Former Members of the AEA

From the complete list of persons who had dropped their membership in AEA since March 1955, when the first records of former members were started, all those who had initially joined the AEA in a February, June or August were selected. Excluding organizational members and those residing outside the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, this sample consisted of 2099 individuals. Of these 25 were eliminated because their names also appeared on the list of members and were therefore presumed to have rejoined. Each of the remaining 2074 former members was mailed a questionnaire on November 12, 1958.

The particular selection of former members who had joined in the above mentioned months was carried out to obtain a sample of about 2000 from the total number of former members. A systematic sample would have been used had there been sufficient time and money to draw it. However, this was not possible, and the only other way of selecting among the total number of former members appeared to be by utilizing one of the few pieces of information about them appearing on the nameplates contained in AEA's files. Of this limited information, including name, address, type of membership, and month joined, the last seemed to be the least biasing criterion of selection. The Executive Director of the AEA selected these three particular months so as to pick a light, medim , and heavy month in terms of new memberships and to scatter the months over the year.

A total of 801 questionnaires was returned, or 38.6% of those mailed. However, 52 of these were eliminated before processing. Eleven had to be rejected because they contained too little information and another ten were disqualified as having been filled out by someone other than the person to whom they were mailed. Finally, an additional 31 were not processed because those who returned them reported that they were currently members of the AEA.[6] Thus a remaining 749 questionnaires from former members were processed for analysis.

The Questionnaire to Adult Educators Who Have Never Been AEA Members

The problem of selecting a sample of adult educators who have never been members of AEA presented a much more difficult problem than locating samples of members and former members. Since there is no directory of all adult educators in the United States or even a rough appriximation to it, it was decided to obtain a number of "never members" by cross-checking various lists of adult educators in particular organizations against the lists of AEA members and former members. The particular lists used and the method of selecting samples of adult educators from them are indicated below:

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[6] Some of the persons evidently joined the AEA between the time the lists of former members were prepared and the time when the questionnaires were returned. In other cases there appeared to be some confusion as to an individual's membership status arising from changes of address, delayed payment of dues, or administrative error. Because both the lists of members and former members were arranged for mailing purposes by state and city, it was especially difficult to cross-check the membership status of persons who had moved after dropping their membership and then rejoined at a new address.

1. District Agricultural Extension and Home Economics Agents. From the County Agents Directory for 1958 published by C. L. Mast, Jr. & Associates of Chicago, the names of all district agents were selected except those who were primarily 4-H Club leaders or specialists. This particular level of workers in Agricultural Extension and Home Economics was selected because an earlier questionnaire sent to all state directors of Agricultural Extension revealed that they felt this was the level for whom membership in AEA would be most valuable. This list contained 397 names.

2. National Association of Public School Adult Educators. The complete membership list of NAPSAE was obtained through the AEA in September of 1958. When all organizational members and those living outside the United States and Puerto Rico were eliminated, 1715 names remained.

3. American Library Association. A list of all members of the Adult Services Division of the ALA (previously the Adult Education Division) was obtained in November 1958. A total of 1325 names were obtained from this list after all members residing outside the United States and Puerto Rico were removed.

4. National University Extension Association. The 1957-1958 NUEA Directory of Administrative Personnel, which purports to be "...a directory of extension administrative personnel in institutions holding membership in the National University Extension Association..." was obtained. Two samples were taken from this directory. The first consisted of all persons who held any one of the following titles: "Vice-president for extension; dean; director; associate dean; associate director; assistant dean; assistant director; evening classes director; academic dean; academic instructor; university instructor; or program director or supervisor." This list contributed 178 names. A second systematic random sample of all other persons listed in the directory, except those holding the titles of registrar, director of admissions, recorder, bursar, business manager, or budget director, was drawn for an additional 234 names.

5. State and Regional Associations. From the AEA home office a list or regional and state adult education councils, committees, and associations was secured consisting of 34 state organizations and 3 regional ones. Thirteen of the state associations were dropped from consideration because they were involved in the AEA Joint Membership Plan and were therefore thought unlikely to contribute the names of many persons never members of the AEA. A letter was written to each of the remaining 24 state and regional associations requesting a list of their membership. Six state associations and one regional association

cooperated by furnishing such lists. Two additional associations replied that they had no such lists. Repeated attempts to contact officers of the remaining associations to obtain such lists were unsuccessful. One of the seven lists sent to us was not used because it contained only adult educators in the public schools. The six lists finally used were those from the following organizations: The Mountain Plains Adult Education Association; The Colorado Council of Adult Education; The Iowa Association for Adult Education; The New Mexico Council on Adult Eduation; The Ohio Association for Adult Education; and The Adult Education Association of Louisiana. (One list arrived too late for use.) From these lists 393 names were obtained.

The names and addresses on each of these lists were cross-checked against the lists of current and former AEA members and against each other to remove duplications. A few names also had to be eliminated because the addresses supplied were not complete enough for mailing. The results of these eliminations are indicated in Table 6. Finally, systematic random samples of the remaining names from the NAPSAE and ALA lists were taken so as to obtain a mailing of approximately 300 persons from each of these lists. A total of 1461 questionnaires was mailed to persons presumed never to have been members of AEA, the mailing occurring on December 12, 1958 for the Agricultural Extension and Home Economics District Agents and on January 5, 1959 for all the others.

A total of 634 of these questionnaires was returned or 43.4% of those mailed. However, fully 12% of those returned had to be eliminated because those replying indicated on their questionnaire that they were or had been members of AEA. Since these lists had been screened to eliminate current and former members prior to mailing, this high percentage of ineligible questionnaires requires a word of explanation. It would seem that these errors could have crept in in at least three ways. First, the list of members was obtained in September of 1958 and that of former members in October of 1958, but the sample of "never members" was not mailed until January of 1958 and many were not returned until

Table 6: Information About the Lists Utilized to Obtain a Sample of Persons Who Had Never Been Members of AEA

		Eliminations				
Source of list	Size of list*	AEA members	Former AEA members	Other reasons**	Total never members	Total mailed
Agricultural Extension District Agents	397	58	20	5	314	314
NAPSAE members	1715	276	56	-	1383	307
ALA Adult Services Division members	1325	123	37	-	1165	290
NUEA deans, directors, etc.	178	62	4	-	112	112
Sample of NUEA other personnel	234	17	7	4	206	206
State and regional association members	393	120	16	25	232	232
Total	4242	656	140	34	3412	1461

March of 1959. Consequently, some of the presumed "never members" may have joined the AEA during the lapsed period. Secondly, the list of former members of the AEA goes back only to March 1955, while some of the presumed "never members" may have joined and left the AEA prior to this date. Third and probably most important, the lists of current and former members were arranged not alphabetically by last names but by states and cities. Consequently it was difficult to cross-check the names of persons from the "never member" lists with these AEA lists if (a) the person resided in a different town than the one in which he was employed, (b) had two or more office addresses, or (c) had recently changed either his home or office address.[7] The final number of tabulated "never member" questionnaires from each of the various sources, along with information indicating how eliminations from the tabulated group were carried out, is found in Table 7.

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* Excludes those residing outside the United States or Puerto Rico and organizational members.

** Other reasons include address inadequate for mailing and duplication on another list of never members.

Table 7: Information Concerning the Extent of Return of the "never member" Questionnaires and the Elimination of Some of Them Prior to Tabulation

				Not tabulated because			
Source of list	Total mailed	Total returned: No.	%	Claimed AEA membership	Claimed former AEA membership	Other reasons*	No. tabulated
Agricultural Extension District Agents	314	153	49%	8	4	4	137
NAPSAE members	307	115	38%	11	6	1	97
ALA Adult Services Division members	290	102	35%	2	3	–	97
NUEA deans, directors, etc.	112	45	40%	8	2	–	35
NUEA other personnel	206	99	48%	10	3	3	83
State and regional association members	232	118	51%	12	6	2	98
Total	1461	634**	43%	51	24	10	549**

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[7] In only a few cases were the research staff able to locate those claiming membership in the member list even after such a claim was made on a "never member" questionnaire. This suggests that perhaps some claiming AEA membership did not in fact hold it. However, in order to obtain as pure a sample of never members as possible, in all cases of doubt, individuals claiming membership were removed from the never member sample.

*These other reasons generally involve elimination of a questionnaire because it contained insufficient data to make tabulation worthwhile.

**These columns do not total exactly because two questionnaires were returned which could not be identified as coming from one of the specific lists as the respondents had removed all identifying codes from the questionnaire.

The final tabulated sample of never members is at best a set of specific sub-samples of adult educators who do not claim ever to have been members of AEA. No claim at all is made that the aggregate of these sub-samples is representative in any way of all the adult educators who have never joined the AEA, and tabulations for this aggregate have generally been presented only when little or no difference occurs among the sub-samples. No attempt has been made to assess the return rate biases of even the sub-samples and no claims are made about the extent of bias which may exist in the sub-samples. At best, these samples of "never members" provide only limited and probably not very reliable information about persons who have never been members of AEA, and not too much reliance should be placed on conclusions resulting from an examination of these questionnaires.

The Questionnaire to State Directors of Agricultural Extension

On September 27, 1958, a two-page questionnaire was mailed to each state director of agricultural extension and home economics in the continental United States and Puerto Rico. All but one of these were returned.

The Interviews

Questionnaires are a useful means of collecting systematic information from large numbers of people, but they have some serious limitations. By and large questionnaires tend to obscure or neglect the more subtle opinions and views, do not allow for further probing of the more interesting suggestions and opinions, and generally fail to obtain the full views of those who are most informed and most thoughtful on the topics covered. For these reasons it was decided to supplement the questionnaire survey with relatively unstructured personal interviews with a limited number of persons, especially those most familiar with the AEA and adult education. Several different approaches were used in selecting the individuals to be interviewed.

Top Officers and Staff. As one method of obtaining a number of persons who were especially familiar with the AEA and adult education, it was decided to interview those who were currently holding, or in the past had held, important positions in the AEA or related organizations. This sample consisted of the following individuals: the top executive officers of AEA, CNO, and NAPSAE; all presidents of the AEA including the president elect; the two most recent presidents of CNO and NAPSAE; and the last full-time executive officers of AEA's organizational predecessors, the American Association for Adult Education and the NEA's Department of Adult Education. All but one of these 17 interviews were completed. The interviews ranged from one to six and a half hours in length and averaged almost two and three-quarter hours each.

Interviews With Other Prominant Adult Educators. A second list of interviewees was obtained by requesting a panel of eleven judges, who were suggested by the AEA Executive Committee, to supply a list of names of persons "of prominence and experience in the field" whom they felt should be interviewed. Nine of these judges prepared such a list, and their nominations were compared so as to interview those whom the most judges named. Excluding persons who were already slated for interviews as top officers or staff and excluding foundation officials whom it did not seem politic to interview, it was found that 20 individuals were mentioned by at least four of the judges. One of these was out of the country at the time, but each of the remaining 19 was interviewed. These interviews provided such interesting information that it was decided to expand their number. Consequently an attempt was made to interview in addition those 17 persons who had been mentioned by three judges. Because this decision was made relatively late in the interviewing, it was not economically possible to reach all of them.

However, twelve of these individuals were interviewed and another one had been interviewed previously in the Delegate Assembly sample described below.[8] Thus a total of 32 interviews was completed with these prominent adult educators from the total list of 37. These interviews ranged from one to five hours in length and averaged approximately two hours.

Interviews With Members of the Delegate Assembly of the AEA. In order to insure that interviews were conducted with AEA members in most parts of the country and in order to obtain the views of those persons who were at the same time more informed about the AEA than average and yet closely in touch with the rank and file of AEA's members, a sample of 34 members of the 1958 Delegate Assembly was selected. In preparing this sample, the country was divided into the 15 regions indicated in Table 8, and a number of delegates were selected at random in each region, the number being proportional to AEA's membership in that region.

Of the 34 intended interviews, 22 were completed with the person initially sampled, ten were completed with substitutes from the same region, and two were never completed, in one instance because of failure to find a mutually convenient time and in the other made financially impossible because the residence of the delegate was highly inaccessible and neither he nor his alternates attended the 1958 Conferences as expected. Nine of the ten substitutions were required for reasons of economy. Initially it was hoped that those delegates from the most distant regions could be interviewed at the 1958 conference. Many of them, however, were not present at the Conference, and consequently it was necessary either to interview their alternate or, in making trips to their region, to select two delegates from the same town or city rather than make a special trip for each

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[8] Of the four who were not interviewed, two resided on the West Coast, one in the deep South, and one in Pennsylvania.

Table 8: The Geographic Regions in Which Those Interviewed Reside

Region**	Prominent educators sample		Delegate Assembly sample		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
I. Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut	1	2%	2	6%	3	4%
II. New York	15	31	4	13	19	24
III. Pennsylvania and New Jersey	1	2	3	9	4	5
IV. Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia	9	19	2	6	11	14
V. Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Puerto Rico	1	2	2	6	3	4
VI. North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky	-	-	1	3	1	1
VII. Texas and Louisiana	-	-	1	3	1	1
VIII. Indiana and Ohio	3	6	3	9	6	7
IX. Illinois	5	10	2	6	7	9
X. Wisconsin and Michigan	3	6	3	9	6	7
XI. Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas	2	4	2	6	4	5
XII. Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota	-	-	2	6	2	3
XIII. Utah, Wyoming, California, New Mexico	2	4	-	-	2	3
XIV. Nevada, Arizona, California, Hawaii	5	10	4	13	9	11
XV. Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Alaska	-	-	1	3	1	1
Canada	1	2	-	-	1	1
Total	48	99%	32	98%	80	100%

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[*] These columns do not total 100% because of rounding.

[**] The regional divisions used here are the ones utilized by the AEA in elections for members of the Executive Committee.

delegate. Whenever financial considerations permitted, the alternates were drawn randomly. In no instance was an alternate selected for reasons of personal acquaintance.

The interviews with the members of the Delegate Assembly ranged from one to two and three-quarters hours in length and lasted an average of about two hours each.

The Composition of the Combined Interview Sample

The same basic interview schedule was used for each of the three above samples, and consequently, the three samples have generally been combined into one large sample and results reported only about their total except where a specific sample is mentioned. Therefore, some basic information about those who were interviewed may be useful in considering the statements made on the basis of this sample.

As shown in Table 8, those interviewed resided in many areas of the country. The Delegate Assembly sample, which was intentionally selected so as to give wide geographical coverage, is especially well dispersed. The sample of prominent educators, which consists of both the top officers and staff sample and the sample of other prominent educators mentioned above, is much more concentrated in a few areas. More than two-thirds of these prominent educators reside in New York City, Washington, D. C., or Chicago or in their suburbs. Since most of these people are employed by large private or governmental organizations whose headquarters are typically found in these three cities, this concentration is understandable.

The organizations in which the interviewees were employed are indicated in Table 9. In the Delegate Assembly sample it may be seen that there is a great concentration in the universities and public schools, for 72% of the sample were employed in one of these two institutions. This is not a result of the sampling but reflects the situation in the Delegate Assembly where 68% of the members in 1958 were from one of these two institutions. The prominent educators sample is somewhat more dispersed over several types of organizations although it also contains many individuals from the universities and naturally enough shows concentration in adult education organizations and councils.

Table 9: Organizations in Which Those Interviewed Were Employed

Organization in which employed	Prominent educators sample N	Prominent educators sample %	Delegate Assembly sample N	Delegate Assembly sample %	Total N	Total %
Public school	4	8%	11	34%	15	19%
College or university	17	35	12	38	29	36
Adult education organization, council, or foundation	11	23	-	-	11	14
Business and industry	4	8	-	-	4	5
Health and welfare organization	3	6	2	6	5	6
Libraries	-	-	3	9	3	4
Agricultural Extension or farm organization	2	4	1	3	3	4
Federal Government	2	4	1	3	3	4
Unions	3	6	-	-	3	4
Youth Serving organization	-	-	2	6	2	2
Church	1	2	-	-	1	1
Retired	1	2	-	-	1	1
	48	98%*	32	99%*	80	100%

In general, those interviewed held powerful positions in the field of adult education. Nine were professors of adult education, and most of the others held such positions as assistant superintendants of large state or city school systems, deans of large universities, or they were educational directors of state library systems, large business organizations, or large national private organizations. Excluding the professors of education, approximately half of the sample administered, directed, supervised, or coordinated the work of fifty or more paid adult educators. Many others had important positions where they influenced large numbers of volunteer workers.

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* These columns do not total 100% because of rounding.

Table 10 indicates the demographic composition of the sample. There it may be seen that those interviewed are predominantly male, over 40 years old, and holders of advanced degrees in education. Of those holding advanced degrees, about a third received their degree in adult education.

The interviewees' contacts with the AEA and its affiliates appear to be both intensive and of long duration. About 85% had joined the AEA during its first eighteen months and approximately 60% had previously belonged to either the American Association for Adult Education or the Department of Adult Education of the NEA, the two preceding organizations. Seventeen of the interviewees were also members of NAPSAE, seven of these had been on its Executive Committee, and four had served as President of NAPSAE. Sixteen had been organizational representatives to CNO, fourteen of these had been on CNO's Executive Committee, and five had been Chairman or President of CNO.[9] A total of 34 interviewees, 42%, had been members of AEA's Executive Committee, and, as noted previously, all presidents of AEA had been interviewed.[10]

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[9] As previously mentioned, the two most recent presidents of NAPSAE and CNO were purposely selected for interviewing as part of the sample of top officers and staff. The additional officers of these two organizations were included as part of the sample of persons mentioned three or more times as "prominent and experienced in the field" by the panel of judges referred to above.

[10] The great majority of those holding the organizational offices mentioned were those drawn in the top officers and staff or "other prominent adult educators" sample. Among the Delegate Assembly sample only three had been members of AEA's Executive Committee, and only three had held important positions in CNO or NAPSAE.

In summary, the combined interview sample contains persons from all parts of the country and many different agencies. Although no claim is

Table 10: The Demographic Composition of Those Interviewed

	Prominent educators sample	Delegate Assembly sample	Total
Sex:			
Male	83%	66%	76%
Female	17	34	24
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(48)	(32)	(80)
Age:			
Under 40	–	12%	5%
40 to 49	48%	45	46
50 and over	52	44	49
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(48)	(32)	(80)
Highest academic degree:			
Bachelor's	17%	16%	16%
Master's	21	59	36
Doctor's	62	25	48
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(48)	(32)	(80)
Subject of advanced degree:			
Adult Education	43%	22%	34%
Other educational	32	41	36
Social science	15	11	13
Humanities	8	18	12
Other or unknown	2	8	5
	100%*	100%*	100%*
Base of %	(40)	(27)	(67)

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* These percentages are based on the number of interviewees who hold either a master's or doctor's degree.

made that this sample is representative of any specific universe of adult educators, special attention has been paid to the views expressed by the interviewees because of their familiarity with the AEA and because of the prominence of their positions in adult education, the AEA, and its related organizations. Further, it is the opinion of the authors that the interview sample contains a large proportion of those people whose views and opinions on adult education and the AEA are most influential in the field today.

Other Interviews

An additional 20 interviews, of varying lengths, were conducted for various specific reasons. Twelve of these were with former members of the AEA who were interviewed about their decision to drop their membership. Seven of these former members were residents of New York City, and the remaining five resided in the following cities: Chattanooga, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Berkeley, and Washington, D. C.[11] Two interviews were conducted on organizational problems with the executive officers of large national organizations outside the field of adult education; a group interview of the Executive Board of the National University Extension Association was completed; and five informal interviews were held with persons specially qualified to report on specific and strategic occurrences in the operation of the AEA.

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[11] Initially it was planned to obtain thirty interviews with former members of the AEA from a widely dispersed sample. As this was attempted, it was discovered that in a great many cases the available addresses of the former members were no longer correct. Consequently, the cost of locating the sample proved prohibitive when carried on outside the New York City area. For this reason the initial plans of obtaining a larger and widely distributed sample were terminated and only the modest sample described above was completed.

APPENDIX B

The Extrapolated Future of AEA Individual Memberships*

Extrapolation, the projection of past trends into the future, is frequently a fallacious method of forecasting the future since it does not take into account new factors and conditions which may arise to disrupt these trends. Nevertheless, the extrapolation procedure often does prove valuable by contributing new insights into certain processes behind the trends and by suggesting differing ways in which the trends may be altered. For these reasons, this Appendix records recent trends in individual AEA memberships with the aim of examining the possible consequences of these trends and locating some of the processes which appear to lie behind them.

Figure 1 of Chapter III presents the overall pattern of AEA memberships, including both individual and organizational memberships. The data from which this figure was constructed, however, are of varying degrees of precision and completeness. Only limited clues may be found about the size of AEA's membership prior to early 1952, and therefore a dotted line has been used in Figure 1 of Chapter III to estimate the membership at the earliest period. From 1952 until the end of 1955 somewhat more systematic data were apparently kept, but the only systematic record of it available today appears in the form of various graphs and figures in the annual reports of the AEA. Since 1956, however, complete and detailed records of the membership have been compiled and retained, and it is only this last period which will be considered here.

The Downward Trend. As nearly everyone connected with the AEA knows, the total membership of the AEA has consistently declined since the beginning of 1956. This is shown in Figure 1 on the following page. For a month or

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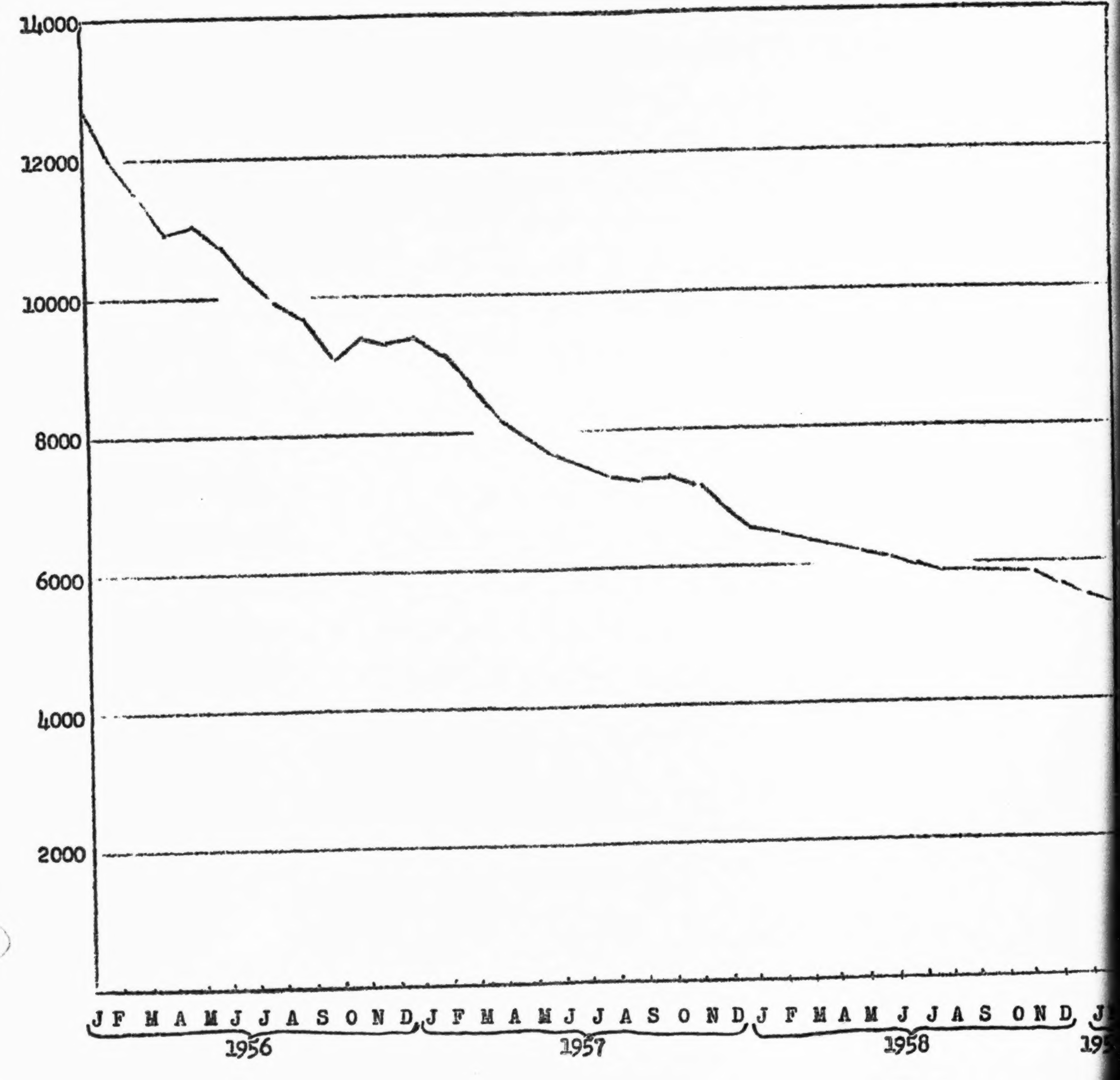
*This appendix was prepared by William L. Nicholls II.

Figure 1

Total Number of AEA Individual Memberships per Month



two the decline may appear to cease or even turn into an increase, but the long term trend is definitely downward.

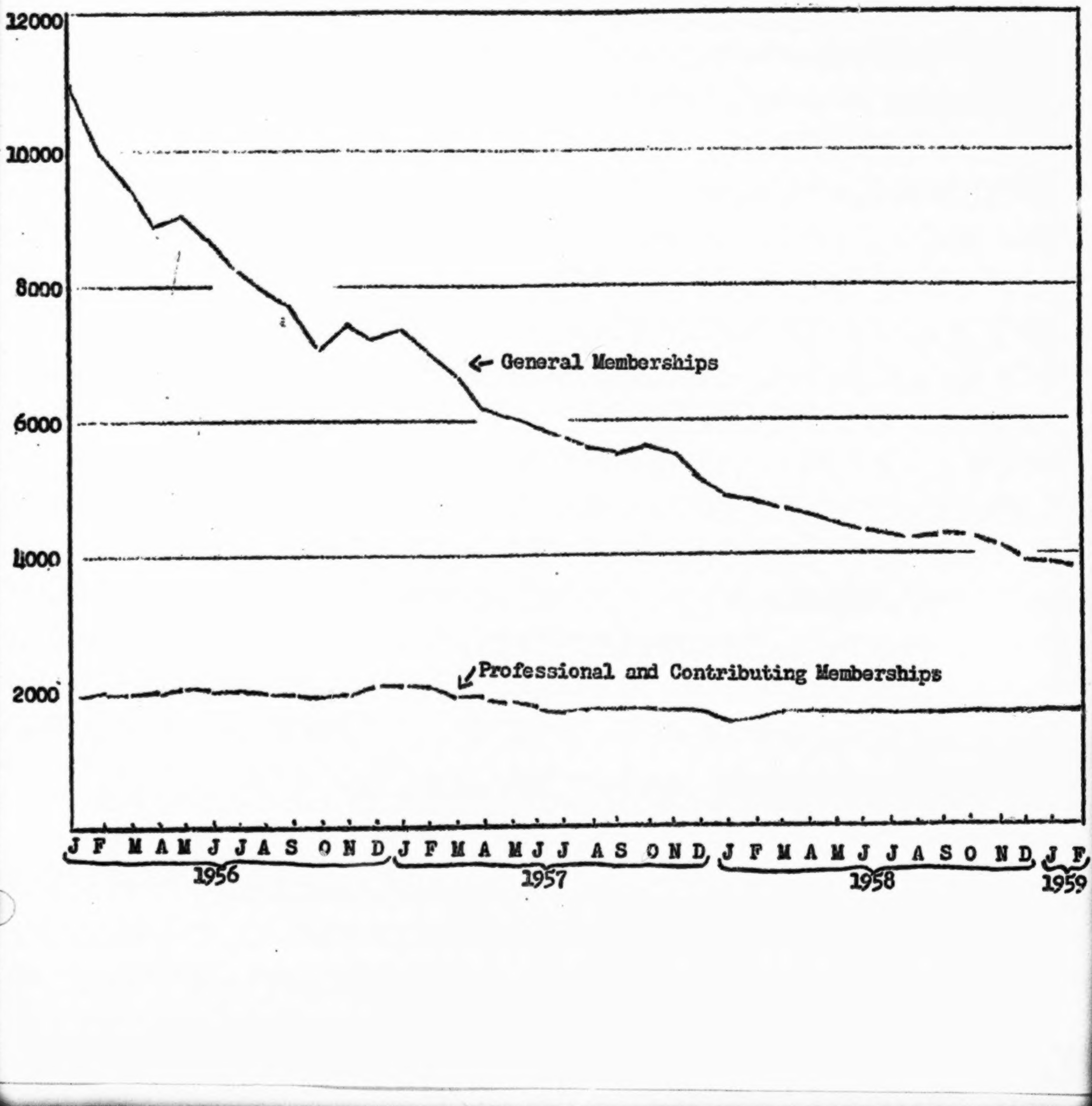
Variations by Type of Membership. As a first step in analyzing the problem of membership decline, it is useful to look separately at the various types of memberships. The majority of the members are general members, those who pay a $5.00 fee and receive Adult Leadership for their membership. The professional members pay a fee of $10.00 and also receive Adult Education as well as Adult Leadership. Contributing members pay a fee of $15.00 and receive not only both these publications but additional publications. Because there are so few contributing members they will be grouped together with the professional members here. Organizational members and subscribers to the two publications are not included in this analysis.

In Figure 2 it is found that the trend in membership differs considerably according to the kind of membership. During the past three years there has been a slight decline in professional and contributing memberships, but in the last year there appears to be little change from month to month in the number of professional and contributing members. On the other hand, there appears to be an almost constant decline in the number of general memberships during the last three years, and the trend appears to continue right up to the latest available data. Therefore, in order to understand AEA's past and continuing loss of members, it is important to examine the loss of general memberships in more detail.

Components of the General Membership Loss. Any decline in membership can be analyzed into two simple components: (1) the dropping out of members who have already joined; and (2) the extent of recruitment of new members. (For simplicity, the transfer from one type of membership to another or

Figure 2

A Comparison of Membership Trends
by Type of Membership



from membership to subscriber will be ignored here.) To what extent have these two components been involved in AEA's loss of general members?

First let us look at the extent of the loss of membership through resignation of, or the failure to renew general memberships. As Figure 3 shows, the percentage of general members who have failed to continue their memberships has fluctuated wildly month by month during the past three years. Undoubtedly the greatest fluctuations, such as those in the early months of 1957, represent the aftermaths of promotion campaigns. On a year by year basis it is found that during 1956 some 45% of the general members did not renew, during 1957 some 57% did not renew, and during 1958 42% did not renew.[1] Thus even in the best of the three years, the most recent one, better than two out of five of the general members did not continue their membership. With such a loss, then, it is small wonder that the total number of general members has declined.

Of course, this loss might have been equalized by new general members, but this would seem unlikely unless an intensive campaign were waged for new memberships. To make up the 1956 loss almost 4000 new memberships would have been required. In 1957 it would have taken better than 3000 new memberships to stem the tide, while 2000 new memberships would have prevented further decline in 1958. In actual fact, only 1661 new general members were obtained in 1956, 1067 in 1957, and 889 in 1958. The month by month new memberships are recorded in Figure 4. These figures not only show that the new memberships have nowhere approached the number necessary to hold constant the number of general memberships, but they also indicate that in each of the last three years the AEA has recruited progressively fewer new members. Thus not only has the AEA lost general members at a fairly rapid rate, but it also appears to be losing its ability or the resources to attract new ones.

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[1] By comparison, the percentage of professional and contributing members who failed to renew for each of these years was 26% for 1956, 41% for 1957, and 31% for 1958.

Figure 3

The Per Cent of General Members Who Did Not Renew Their Membership by the Month in Which Their Membership Was Due for Renewal

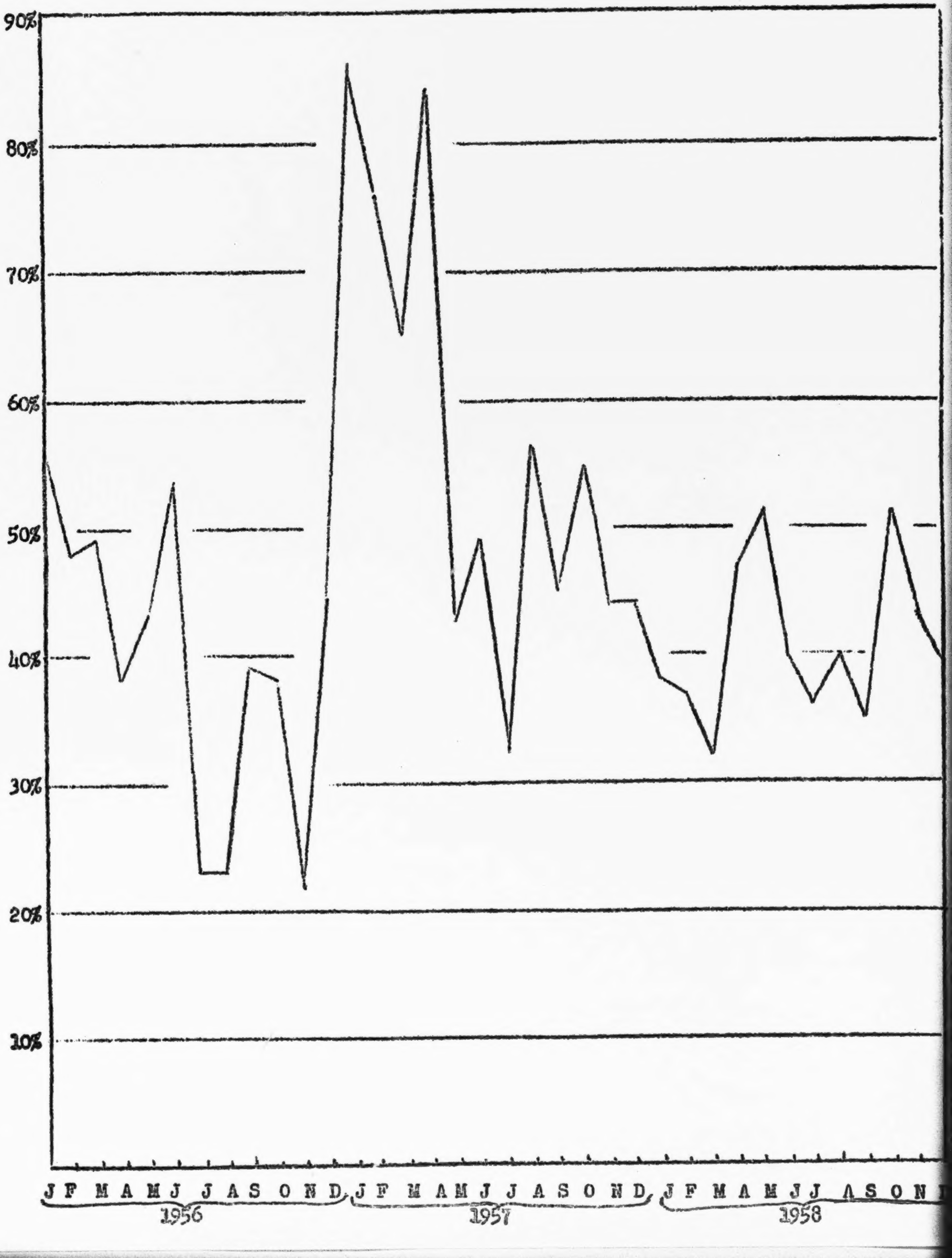
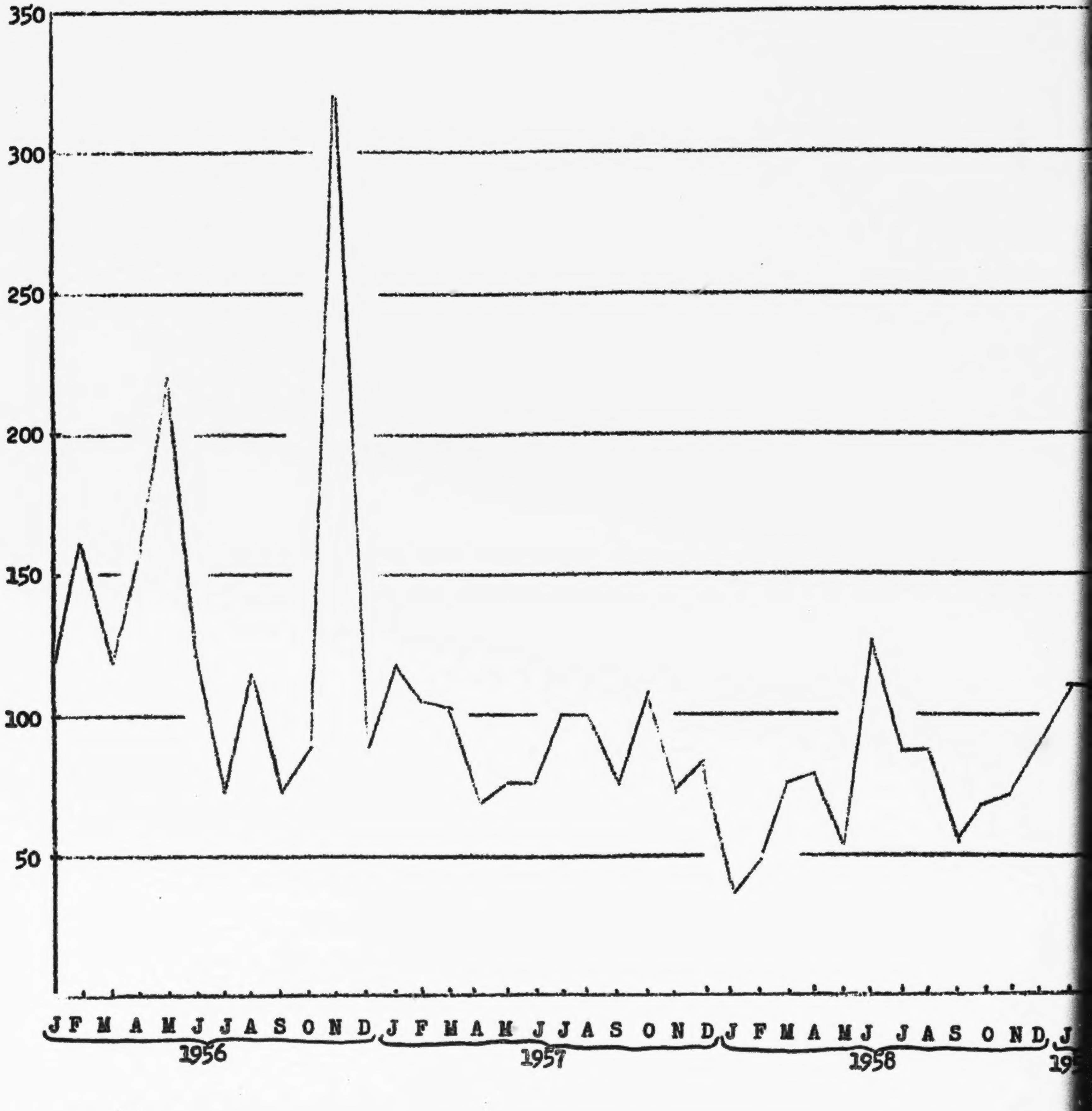


Figure 4

The Number of New General Members
Recruited in Each Month



There appears to be some sign of hope in Figure 4, in that during the first two months of 1959 the AEA did recruit considerably more general members than it did during the same two months of 1958. While this may very well be nothing more than a monthly fluctuation, the most recent data at least do not appear to indicate a further decline in the AEA's ability to attract new members.

Extrapolation to the Future. On the basis of the 1958 data, what can we guess about the future of AEA's general membership? Suppose that the AEA continues to lose about 42% of its general members each year as it did in 1958. Further suppose that it can attract about 900 new members each year, which is just slightly better than it did in 1958. Under these assumptions how many general members will the AEA end up with in the long run? The answer obviously is that the AEA will end up with just enough members so that the 42% lost each year will be made up by 900 new members, and this means that in the long run the AEA will have 2142 general members. If this is added to the fairly constant number of about 1650 professional and contributing members, the total membership of the AEA would be estimated at about 3800. In other words, if the current trends continue (and no one can tell definitely whether they will or not, although they probably will not) the AEA will end up with about as many members as it had in late 1952.

Again assuming that these trends continue, one may wonder how fast the AEA would lose its members. A little arithmetic can provide the answers. If the current trends continue, the AEA can expect to lose about 700 general members in 1959, about 400 more in 1960, another 200 in 1961, slightly more than 100 in 1962, and progressively smaller additional numbers each of the remaining years until it reaches its equilibrium point of 2142 general members. All this, of course, assumes that the declining membership does not bring about a loss of services or psychological disillusionment which accelerates the decline. If these additional factors take hold at all, they would seem most likely to occur during 1959 when the decline would be greatest and most noticeable.

Recent Tests of the Projections. Since the foregoing projections were made on the basis of 1958 membership trends and apply in part to 1959, it is possible to examine the accuracy of the projections at least for the first part of 1959. This is done in Table 1. There month by month projections of the size of the general membership as prepared early in 1959 are contrasted with the actual figures for the first part of the year. Although the projections and actual figures are generally not too different, it should be noted that in every instance the projections were on the optimistic side. Thus at least for the first half of 1959, it appears that the AEA is losing general members faster than projected above. If this discrepancy between projected and actual membership continues throughout the rest of 1959, one may suspect that the estimate of the eventual membership may have to be revised downward.

Some persons connected closely with the AEA have suggested that although there still is a decline in general memberships, there has been an increase in professional and contributing memberships during early 1959. If this were markedly so, the foregoing attempts to estimate the future membership of the AEA would be seriously in error, since the discussion is based on the assumption that the number of professional and contributing memberships would remain constant. The increase in professional and contributing memberships pointed to, however, is so small that for all practical purposes it seems more realistic to view the number of such memberships as remaining constant. From January to July of 1959, the number of general members declined by 454 for a loss of approximately 12%. During the same period there was an increase of 31 professional and contributing members, or a gain of less than 2%. Such gains are probably viewed more realistically as minor fluctuations than significant trends.

Table 1: A Month-By-Month Comparison of the Projected Number of General Members With the Actual Number Reported by the AEA

	Projected	Actual	Projected - Actual
January 1959	3895	3895	0*
February	3833	3804	+29
March	3772	3723	+49
April	3711	3695	+16
May	3650	3612	+38
June	3588	3511	+77
July	3527	3461	+66
August	3466	**	**
September	3405	**	**
October	3343	**	**
November	3282	**	**
December	3221	**	**
January 1960	3159	**	**

Implications for Recruiting and Holding Members. In addition to providing forecasts, the previous methods can also be used to see what changes in holding power or recruiting would be necessary to stem the tide. For example, suppose that the AEA obtains approximately 900 new general members in 1959, as it did in 1958. What per cent of those who are currently general members could it afford to lose and still maintain the same membership? The answer is that it could afford to lose only about 24%, and this seems highly optimistic. During 1958 the AEA lost 28% of its contributing members and 31% of its professional members; so it seems likely to lose a higher percentage of general members. Considering the AEA's past experience and the great turnover in the field of adult education, it seems safer to assume that the actual loss will be much closer to the 42% found in 1958.

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* Because the January figures were used as the basis for the projections, this difference of zero arises by definition and does not imply perfect prediction.

** Information not available at time of writing.

If this is the case, then one may ask how many new general members will have to be recruited in order to prevent further decline? Once again, a little arithmetic provides the answer. It will have to find 1600 new general members or about 80% more than it was able to recruit in 1958.

Because 1959 will be drawing to a close before the release of this report and because it appears that the above projections for 1959 will at least be approximately correct, it may seem more realistic to consider the recruiting problem in 1960. How many new general members will be required to stabilize the membership in that year if other conditions remain the same? Even in 1960 a major effort would seem necessary because slightly more than 1300 new general members will be required, and this is still a figure almost 50% greater than the AEA was able to recruit in 1958.

As the AEA grows smaller the funds and energies available for recruiting may also decline, and consequently a better approach to the membership problem may lie in attempting to retain each year a larger proportion of the members it has. Undoubtedly both recruiting and increasing the organization's holding power will be necessary to stabilize the membership, but so long as more than two out of every five general members terminate their membership each year, the AEA seems faced either with an almost inevitably smaller membership in the long run or the necessity of extensive recruiting programs.

APPENDIX C

Tables Referred to in Text

Table 1: The Frequency of Discussions of Common Problems in Adult Education with Those Outside the Respondent's Own Agency by Level of Responsibility*

Frequency of discussions	Top administrator	Other administrator	Broad gauge workers	Primarily workers
More than one/week	35%	28%	17%	13%
About one/week	23	17	14	15
One to three times/month	32	42	48	44
Not at all	10	13	21	28
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(637)	(237)	(255)	(594)

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* Those who did not answer the question concerning responsibilities, those whose responsibilities are unclassifiable by level, and those with no activities in adult education are excluded from this table. Those who did not answer the question concerning frequency of discussions are also excluded.

APPENDIX C

Table 2: Other National Organizations Concerned with Adult Education in Which AEA Members Reported Membership

Organization	% of total sample	% of those in at least one such organization
National Association of Public School Adult Educators	6%	14%
American Library Association	4	10
American Society of Training Directors	2	4
American Vocational Association	2	4
National Association of County Agricultural Agents; National Home Demonstration Agents' Association	2	4
National University Extension Association or Association of University Evening Colleges	3	6
National Education Association	2	5
Association for Higher Education; National Home Study Council; American Association of Junior Colleges; American Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities; National Council of Churches, Department of Adult Work; National Catholic Educational Association, Commission on Adult Education; Society of Public Health Educators	2	5
CNO affiliated organization, other than those listed above	13	27
All other organizations	16	35
Organization not given	5	10
Not a member of another national organization	54	—
	111%[*]	124%[*]
Base of %	(2000)	(920)

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[*] These columns total more than 100 per cent because membership in more than one organization could be mentioned.

APPENDIX C

Table 3: Reasons Why the AEA Is Considered More Valuable Than Other Organizations in Adult Education*

The AEA is more relevant to respondent's activities and interests in adult education	13%
The AEA dispenses techniques and methods, or gives more practical assistance including resource materials.	20
The AEA provides a more comprehensive scope and permits understanding of other programs; also, permits interchange of ideas, information, and experiences among persons in different areas of adult education.	22
The AEA's goals are more interesting or more important.	4
The AEA is more intellectually stimulating; its theoretical content or philosophy is more valuable	3
The AEA's publications are better or more valuable (respondents were classified in this category only if their responses could not be coded above).	13
Other and ambiguous reasons	10
No answer	33
	118%**
Base of %	(288)

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* Those who do not belong to another national organization in adult education or did not answer the question concerning national organizations are excluded from this table.

** Total exceeds 100% because respondents gave more than one reason.

APPENDIX C

Table 3 (Continued): Reasons Why the AEA is Considered Less Valuable than Other Organizations in Adult Education*

The AEA is less relevant to respondent's own special activities and interests.	36%
The AEA gives less practical assistance in the form of methods and techniques.	9
The AEA is too comprehensive, too broad; it tries to include too many diverse activities and interests	7
The AEA's goals are less important; or its goals need definition	3
The AEA is too theoretical or philosophical.	3
The AEA's publications are less valuable (respondents were classified in this category only if their responses could not be coded above).	2
The AEA provides less opportunity for personal contacts or activities on local, state, or regional level.	5
Not familiar enough with the AEA to say; has spent more time with other organization	14
Other and ambiguous reasons.	9
Special category: The respondent indicates some measure of appreciation or understanding of the AEA's position, type of program, etc., which makes the organization less valuable, e.g., "a situation which is both normal and proper;" "However, AEA gives a broader viewpoint".	11
No answer.	26
	125%**
Base of %	(603)

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*Those who do not belong to another national organization in adult education or did not answer the question concerning national organizations are excluded from this table.

**Total exceeds 100% because respondents gave more than one reason.

APPENDIX C

Table 4: Per Cent Indicating That the Title of Adult Educator is "Very Appropriate" by Type of Position in Adult Education and Magazines Received[*]

Type of position	Magazine Received Both	 Adult Leadership only
All of full-time paid	81% (306)	70% (211)
Part of full-time paid	48% (369)	35% (528)
Part-time paid	61% (57)	39% (74)
Volunteer or unpaid	28% (69)	21% (200)
No position	28% (42)	7% (95)

How to read this table: Each per cent indicates the per cent of individuals at the labeled combination of type of position and magazines received who indicated that the title of adult educator was "very appropriate." Thus the upper left per cent reports that among members with full-time positions concerned exclusively with adult education who received both magazines, 81% thought that the title of adult educator was "very appropriate."

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[*] Those who did not answer the question concerning type of position are excluded from this table.

APPENDIX C

Table 5: Proportion Indicating that Such an Organization Makes a "Great Deal of Difference" According to Summarized Areas of Interest in Adult Education*

Summarized areas of interest	% "Great deal of difference"	Base of %**
Broad and comprehensive	52%	(654)
Work-related	49%	(769)
Education for special roles and interests	48%	(980)
Social and interpersonal education	47%	(1210)
Liberal education	41%	(536)

Table 6: Proportion Indicating that Such an Organization Makes a "Great Deal of Difference" According to Type of Position in Adult Education***

Type of position	% "Great deal of difference"	Base of %
All of part-time paid	46%	(513)
Part of full-time paid	46%	(896)
Part-time paid	52%	(132)
Volunteer or unpaid	50%	(269)
No position	44%	(138)

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[*] Those who did not answer the question concerning either the difference that such an organization makes to adult education or areas of interest are excluded from this table.

[**] Bases total more than 2000 because respondents indicated more than one area of interest.

[***] Those who did not answer the question concerning either the difference that such an organization makes to adult education or type of position are excluded from this table.

Table 7: Proportion Indicating that Such an Organization Makes a "Great Deal of Difference" According to Involvement in the AEA*

Involvement	% "Great deal of difference"	Base of %
Executive Committee	58%	(50)
Delegate Assembly	60%	(158)
Other committees	44%	(78)
No position:		
Attended conference	48%	(328)
Never attended conference	45%	(1321)

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* Those who did not answer the question concerning the difference that such an organization makes to adult education are excluded from this table.

APPENDIX C

Table 8: Comparisons Between Former AEA Members and Current AEA Members

Type of position in adult education	Former* members	Current** members
Full-time paid position concerned entirely with adult education	13%	28%
Full-time paid position with some responsibilities in adult education	50	50
Part-time paid position	12	7
Volunteer or unpaid position	25	15
	100%	100%
Base of %	(513)	(1840)

Primary activities in adult education	Former* members	Current** members
Top administrator	16%	35%
Other administrator	9	13
Broad gauge worker	18	14
Primarily worker	52	33
Unclassifiable	5	5
	100%	100%
Base of %	(513)	(1840)

Membership in adult education voluntary organizations other than the AEA	Former* members	Current** members
Local or city council of adult education	11%	22%
State or regional council of adult education	13	33
National organization concerned with adult education	29	48
None of these	56	31
No answer	5	2
	114%***	136%***
Base of %	(513)	(1840)

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* Only former members with some present position in adult education are included in this table.

** Only current members with some present position in adult education are included in this table.

*** These columns total more than 100% because individuals could be members of more than one type of organization.

APPENDIX C

Table 8 (Continued): Comparisons Between Former AEA Members and Current AEA Members

	Former members	Current members
Appropriateness of the title of "adult educator"		
"It is a very appropriate title and I often think of myself as an adult educator."	22%	48%
"It is a title which could appropriately be applied to me, but I seldom think of myself in this way."	50	41
"It is not an appropriate title for me."	27	9
No answer	1	2
	100%	100%
Base of %	(513)	(1840)
Summarized areas of interest in adult education		
Providing broad, comprehensive adult education	19%	34%
Social and interpersonal education and methods	62	62
Liberal education	21	27
Work-related education	19	39
Remedial education	4	7
Education for special roles and interests	63	50
Other and no answer	3	1
	191%*	220%*
Base of %	(513)	(1840)
Most advanced formal education completed		
Doctorate	13%	18%
Master's degree or degree in law, library science, or similar degree other than degrees in divinity or theology	38	54
Bachelor of divinity or theology or master's degree in divinity or theology	13	—
Completed college	22	19
Did not complete college	13	8
No answer	1	1
	100%	100%
Base of %	(513)	(1840)

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*These columns total more than 100% because respondents frequently expressed an interest in more than one area.

Table 8 (Continued): Comparisons Between Former AEA Members and Current AEA Members

Selected Primary agencies in which adult education functions are carried out	Former members	Current members
Public school	10%	15%
Agricultural or home economics extension	6	6
University evening or extension division	6	9
Other college or university division	6	9
Church or religious organization	27	11
Health or welfare agency	11	12
Library	2	5
Business or industry	4	4
Labor union	1	1
Youth serving agency	6	9
Civic or fraternal organization	5	3
Other agencies or organizations	9	10
Unascertainable or none	7	6
	100%	100%
Base of %	(513)	(1840)

APPENDIX C

Table 9: The Appropriateness of Six Descriptions of the AEA as Viewed by Former and Current Members of the AEA*

Description		Former** members	Current members
"An organization which successfully harmonizes the divergent views and interests of its members"			
	Very appropriate	26%	21%
	Somewhat appropriate	48	55
	Not appropriate	26	24
		100%	100%
	Base of %	(176)	(1114)
"An organization with valuable goals"			
	Very appropriate	77%	76%
	Somewhat appropriate	21	22
	Not appropriate	2	2
		100%	100%
	Base of %	(331)	(1663)
"An organization with clear and attainable goals"			
	Very appropriate	33%	25%
	Somewhat appropriate	55	61
	Not appropriate	12	14
		100%	100%
	Base of %	(233)	(1421)
"An organization which is making real progress toward its goals"			
	Very appropriate	37%	22%
	Somewhat appropriate	50	68
	Not appropriate	13	10
		100%	100%
	Base of %	(167)	(1211)

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* Only respondents who responded to each description are included in the percentages for that description.

** Information is provided only for those former members who hold some kind of position in adult education.

Table 9 (Continued): The Appropriateness of Six Descriptions of the AEA as Viewed by Former and Current Members of the AEA

	Former members	Current members
"An organization whose official pronouncements and decisions reflect the wishes of the great majority of its members"		
Very appropriate	26%	25%
Somewhat appropriate	56	52
Not appropriate	18	23
	100%	100%
Base of %	(108)	(870)
"An organization which has proved effective in representing its members' views to important people and organizations outside it"		
Very appropriate	31%	27%
Somewhat appropriate	48	51
Not appropriate	21	22
	100%	100%
Base of %	(123)	(932)

APPENDIX C

Table 10: Comparisons Between Adult Educators Who Have Never Been AEA Members and Current Members of the AEA

	Never* Members	Current Members: Total* sample	Current Members: Matched** sample
Type of position in adult education			
Full-time paid position concerned entirely with adult education	27%	26%	51%
Full-time paid position with some responsibilities in adult education	44	46	41
Part-time paid position	16	7	4
Volunteer or unpaid position	8	14	3
None	5	7	1
No answer	-	1	-
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(549)	(2000)	(307)
Primary activities in adult education***			
Top administrator	51%	36%	63%
Other administrator	7	14	13
Broad gauge worker	21	15	16
Primarily worker	21	35	8
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(503)	(1751)	(296)
Sex			
Male	60%	60%	57%
Female	40	40	43
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(549)	(2000)	(307)

---

*Because some of the never members claimed to hold no position in adult education, current members making similar claims are also included in these comparisons. For this reason, the distribution of current members in the various categories in this table will be found to differ slightly from those in Table 8 where those claiming no position in adult education were excluded.

**The method by which this matched sample of current members was constructed is described in the footnote on page of Chapter VII.

***Respondents whose activities could not be so classified have been excluded from this table.

APPENDIX C

Table 10 (Continued): Comparisons Between Adult Educators Who Have Never Been AEA Members and Current Members of the AEA

		Current members	
	Never members	Total sample	Matched sample
Mean Age	46.4	46.4	49.5
Base of mean	(549)	(2000)	(307)
Most advanced formal education completed*			
Doctorate	10%	18%	24%
Master's degree or equivalent (including bachelor of divinity or theology)	56	54	63
Completed college	27	19	13
Did not complete college	7	9	-
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(403)	(1993)	(307)
Appropriateness of the title of "adult educator"			
"It is a very appropriate title and I often think of myself as an adult educator."	44%	45%	69%
"It is a title which could appropriately be applied to me, but I seldom think of myself in this way."	41	41	26
"It is not an appropriate title for me."	12	12	4
No answer	3	2	1
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(549)	(2000)	(307)

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* Respondents not answering the question about their education are excluded from this table. Some 19 per cent of the never members did not answer this question, presumably because it appeared on the last part of the questionnaire which many never members failed to notice.

Table 10 (Continued): Comparisons Between Adult Educators Who Have Never Been AEA Members and Current Members of the AEA

		Current Members	
	Never members	Total sample	Matched sample
Membership in adult education voluntary organizations other than the AEA			
Local or city council of adult education	12%	20%	33%
State or regional council of adult education	30	31	72
National organization concerned with adult education	41	46	73
None of these	32	34	9
No answer	6	3	2
	121%[*]	134%[*]	189%[*]
Base of %	(549)	(2000)	(307)
Frequency of contacts with adult educators outside the respondent's own agency			
Once a week or more often	29%	38%	48%
One to three times a month	42	38	42
Less than once a month or not at all	26	21	8
No answer	3	3	3
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(549)	(2000)	(307)

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[*] These percentages total more than 100 per cent because respondents could belong to more than one type of organization.

APPENDIX C

Table 10 (Continued): Comparisons Between Adult Educators Who Have Never Been AEA Members and Current Members of the AEA

Summarized areas of interest in adult education[*]	Never members	Current members Total sample	Current members Matched sample
Providing broad, comprehensive adult education	42%	34%	58%
Social and interpersonal education and methods	51	63	56
Liberal education	35	28	34
Work-related education	45	40	39
Remedial education	12	7	6
Education for special roles and interests	37	51	40
	222%[**]	223%[**]	233%[**]
Base of %	(502)	(1954)	(302)

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[*] Respondents indicating other areas of interest or indicating no area of interest are excluded from this table. Approximately 9 per cent of the never members did not answer or indicated an interest only in rural and agricultural adult education, an interest which has not been classified in the above six categories. Such never members were typically regional directors of Agricultural Extension.

[**] The columns total more than 100 per cent because respondents could report interests in more than one area.

APPENDIX C

Table 11: The Appropriateness of Six Descriptions of the AEA as Viewed by Those Who Have Never Been AEA Members and Current Members*

		Current members	
	Never members	Total sample	Matched sample**
Description			
"An organization which successfully harmonizes the divergent views and interests of its members"			
Very appropriate	17%	21%	12%
Somewhat appropriate	46	55	60
Not appropriate	37	24	28
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(96)	(1114)	(242)
"An organization with valuable goals"			
Very appropriate	63%	76%	67%
Somewhat appropriate	33	22	31
Not a propriate	4	2	2
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(153)	(1663)	(282)
"An organization with clear and attainable goals."			
Very appropriate	25%	25%	18%
Somewhat appropriate	54	61	63
Not appropriate	21	14	19
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(127)	(1421)	(251)

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[*] Only respondents who responded to each description are included in the percentages for that description.

[**] The matched sample of current members utilized here is the same as that found in the previous table.

APPENDIX C

Table 11 (Continued): The Appropriateness of Six Descriptions of the AEA as Viewed by Those Who Have Never Been AEA Members and Current Members

		Current members	
	Never members	Total sample	Matched sample
"An organization which is making real progress toward its goals."			
Very appropriate	24%	22%	19%
Somewhat appropriate	53	68	67
Not appropriate	23	10	14
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(114)	(1211)	(236)
"An organization whose official pronouncements and decisions reflect the wishes of the great majority of its members."			
Very appropriate	22%	25%	17%
Somewhat appropriate	50	52	57
Not appropriate	28	23	26
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(74)	(870)	(205)
"An organization which has proved effective in representing its members' views to important people and organizations outside it."			
Very appropriate	23%	27%	22%
Somewhat appropriate	48	51	57
Not appropriate	29	22	21
	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(97)	(932)	(219)

APPENDIX C

Table 12: The Need For a Generalized Organization in Adult Education as Seen by Six Samples of Adult Educators Who Had Never Been AEA Members

	Samples of Never Members*						
Need for such an organization	Agricultural Extension	ALA's ASD	NAPSAE	NUEA deans	NUEA other	State and regional organization	Total
Essential	12%	26%	42%	11%	15%	31%	23%
Desirable	52	51	42	72	71	46	53
Unnessary	34	12	10	11	13	15	18
NA or DK	2	11	6	6	1	8	6
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(137)	(97)	(97)	(35)	(83)	(98)	(547)**

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* For a description of the samples involved, see Appendix A.

** Two respondents to the never member questionnaire had removed the identifying code from the questionnaire which was used to determine in which sample they had been drawn. Consequently, the total column contains two more cases than the sum of the six sub-samples.

PPENDIX C

Table 13: Concern For Social Action According to Emphasis on a Strong, Centrally Directed National Organization, the Importance of AEA to Adult Education, and Interest in the AEA as an Organization

The best hope for the development of the field of adult education lies in a strong, centrally directed national organization.	Social action on behalf of social change is the basic reason for the existence of a modern adult education movement.				
	Agree strongly	Agree	Don't know or no answer	Disagree	Disagree strongly
Agree, or agree strongly	56%	37%	27%	22%	12%
Don't know or no answer	21	30	34	25	24
Disagree, or disagree strongly	23	33	39	53	64
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %	(235)	(778)	(448)	(476)	(63)
The difference it would make to adult education if there were no AEA					
Great deal of difference	64%	50%	43%	40%	32%
Some difference	35	47	51	55	54
Little or no difference	1	3	6	5	14
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %*	(229)	(770)	(437)	(466)	(63)
Interest in the AEA as an organization					
Very interested	33%	23%	17%	20%	11%
Moderately interested	44	49	44	41	48
Slightly interested	20	25	32	32	27
Not interested	3	3	7	7	14
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base of %*	(232)	(773)	(441)	(473)	(63)

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* Those who did not answer the question are excluded from the bases for per cents.